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I FOUND out at last where I had got to. This plain was well known in our parts under the name of Byezhin Prairie. But there was no possibility of returning home, especially at night; my legs were sinking under me from weariness. I decided to get down to the fires and to wait for the dawn in the company of these men, whom I took for drovers. I got down successfully; but I had hardly let go of the last branch I had grasped, when suddenly two large shaggy white dogs rushed angrily barking upon me. The sound of ringing boyish voices came from round the fires; two or three boys quickly got up from the ground. I called back in response to their shouts of inquiry. They ran up to me, and at once called off the dogs, who were especially struck by the appearance of my Dianka. I came down to them.

I had been mistaken in taking the figures sitting round the fires for drovers. They were simply peasant boys from a neighboring village, who were in charge of a drove of horses. In hot summer weather with us they drive the horses out at night to graze in the open country: the flies and gnats would give them no peace in the daytime; they drive out the drove towards evening, and drive them back in the early morning: it's a great treat for the peasant boys. Bare-headed, in old fur capes, they bestride the most spirited nags, and scurry along with merry cries and hooting and ringing laughter, swinging their arms and legs, and leaping into the air. The fine dust is stirred up in yellow clouds and moves along the road; the tramp of hoofs in unison resounds afar: the horses race along, pricking up their ears; in front of all, with his tail in the air and thistles in his tangled mane, prances some shaggy chestnut, constantly shifting his paces as he goes.

I told the boys I had lost my way, and sat down with them. They asked me where I came from, and then were silent for a little and turned away. Then we talked a little again. I lay down under a bush, whose shoots had been nibbled off, and began to look round. It was a marvelous picture: about the fire a red ring of light quivered, and seemed to swoon away in the embrace of a background of darkness; the flame, flaring up from time to time, cast swift flashes of light beyond the boundary of this circle; a fine tongue of light licked the dry twigs and died away at once; long thin shadows, in their turn breaking in for an instant, danced right up to the very fires; darkness was struggling with light. Sometimes when the fire burnt low and the circle of light shrank together, suddenly out of the encroaching darkness a horse's head was thrust in,—bay, with striped markings, or all white,—stared with intent blank eyes upon us, nipped hastily the long grass, and drawing back again, vanished instantly. One could only hear it still munching and snorting. From the circle of light it was hard to make out what was going on in the darkness; everything close at hand seemed shut off by an almost black curtain; but farther away, hills and forests were dimly visible in long blurs upon the horizon.

The dark unclouded sky stood, inconceivably immense, triumphant, above us in all its mysterious majesty. One felt a sweet oppression at one's heart, breathing in that peculiar, overpowering yet fresh fragrance—the fragrance of a summer night in Russia. Scarcely a sound was to be heard around. Only at times, in the river near, the sudden splash of a big fish leaping, and the faint rustle of a reed on the bank, swaying lightly as the ripples reached it. The fires alone kept up a subdued crackling.

The boys sat round them; there too sat the two dogs, who had been so eager to devour me. They could not for long after reconcile themselves to my presence, and drowsily blinking and staring into the fire, they growled now and then with an unwonted sense of their own dignity; first they growled, and then whined a little, as though deploring the impossibility of carrying out their desires. There were altogether five boys: Fedya, Pavlusha, Ilyusha, Kostya, and Vanya.—From their talk I learnt their names, and I intend now to introduce them to the reader.

The first and eldest of all, Fedya, one would take to be about fourteen. He was a well-made boy, with good-looking, delicate, rather small features, curly fair hair, bright eyes, and a perpetual half merry, half careless smile. He belonged by all appearances to a well-to-do family; and had ridden out to the prairie not through necessity, but for amusement. He wore a gay print shirt, with a yellow border; a short new overcoat slung round his neck was almost slipping off his narrow shoulders; a comb hung from his blue belt. His boots, coming a little way up the leg, were certainly his own—not his father's. The second boy, Pavlusha, had tangled black hair, gray eyes, broad cheek-bones, a pale face pitted with small-pox, a large but well-cut mouth; his head altogether was large—"a beer-barrel head," as they say—and his figure was square and clumsy. He was not a good-looking boy—there's no denying it!—and yet I liked him: he looked very sensible and straightforward, and there was a vigorous ring in his voice. He had nothing to boast of in his attire: it consisted simply of a homespun shirt and patched trousers. The face of the third, Ilyusha, was rather uninteresting: it was a long face, with short-sighted eyes and a hook nose; it expressed a kind of dull, fretful uneasiness; his tightly drawn lips seemed rigid; his contracted brow never relaxed; he seemed continually blinking from the firelight. His flaxen—almost white—hair hung out in thin wisps under his low felt hat, which he kept pulling down with both hands over his ears. He had on new bast-shoes and leggings; a thick string, wound three times round his figure, carefully held together his neat black smock. Neither he nor Pavlusha looked more than twelve years old. The fourth, Kostya, a boy of ten, aroused my curiosity by his thoughtful and sorrowful look. His whole face was small, thin, freckled, pointed at the chin like a squirrel's; his lips were barely perceptible: but his great black eyes, that shone with liquid brilliance, produced a strange impression; they seemed trying to express something for which the tongue—his tongue, at least—had no words. He was undersized and weakly, and dressed rather poorly. The remaining boy, Vanya, I had not noticed at first: he was lying on the ground, peacefully curled up under a square rug, and only occasionally thrust his curly brown head out from under it; this boy was seven years old at the most.

So I lay under the bush at one side and looked at the boys. A small pot was hanging over one of the fires: in it potatoes were cooking. Pavlusha was looking after them, and on his knees he was trying them by poking a splinter of wood into the boiling water. Fedya was lying leaning on his elbow, and smoothing out the skirts of his coat. Ilyusha was sitting beside Kostya, and still kept blinking constrainedly. Kostya's head drooped despondently, and he looked away into the distance. Vanya did not stir under his rug. I pretended to be asleep. Little by little, the boys began talking again.

At first they gossiped of one thing and another,—the work of to-morrow, the horses; but suddenly Fedya turned to Ilyusha, and as though taking up again an interrupted conversation, asked him:—

«Come then, so you've seen the domovoy?»

«No, I didn't see him, and no one ever can see him,» answered Ilyusha, in a weak hoarse voice, the sound of which was wonderfully in keeping with the expression of his face: «I heard him. Yes, and not I alone.»

«Where does he live—in your place?» asked Pavlusha.

«In the old paper-mill.»

«Why, do you go to the factory?»

«Of course we do. My brother Avdushka and I, we are paper-glazers.»

«I say—factory hands!»

«Well, how did you hear it, then?» asked Fedya.

«It was like this. It happened that I and my brother Avdushka, with Fyodor of Mihyevska, and Ivashka the Squint-eyed, and the other Ivashka who comes from the Red Hills, and Ivashka of Suhorukov too, and there were some other boys there as well,—there were ten of us boys there altogether,—the whole shift that is,—it happened that we spent the night at the paper-mill; that's to say, it didn't happen, but Nazarov the overseer kept us. 'Why,' said he, 'should you waste time going home, boys? There's a lot of work to-morrow; so don't go home, boys.' So we stopped, and were all lying down together; and Avdushka had just begun to say, 'I say, boys, suppose the domovoy were to come?' And before he'd finished saying so, some one suddenly began walking over our heads: we were lying down below, and he began walking up-stairs overhead where the wheel is. We listened: he walked; the boards seemed to be bending under him, they creaked so; then he crossed over, above our heads: all of a sudden the water began to drip and drip over the wheel; the wheel rattled and rattled and again began to turn, though the sluices of the conduit above had been let down. We wondered who could have lifted them up so that the water could run; anyway, the wheel turned and turned a little, and then stopped. Then he went to the door overhead, and began coming down-stairs, and came down like this, not hurrying himself; and the stairs seemed to groan under him too.

«Well, he came right down to our door, and waited and waited—and all of a sudden the door simply flew open. We were in a fright; we looked—there was nothing. Suddenly what if the net on one of the vats didn't begin moving; it got up, and went rising and ducking and moving in the air as though some one were stirring with it, and then it was in its place again. Then at another vat a hook came off its nail, and then was on its nail again; and then it seemed as if some one came to the door, and suddenly coughed and choked like a sheep, but so loudly! We all fell down in a heap and huddled against one another. Just weren't we in a fright that night!"

"I say!" murmured Pavel, "what did he cough for?"

"I don't know: perhaps it was the damp."

All were silent for a little.

"Well," inquired Fedya, "are the potatoes done?"

Pavlusha tried them.

"No, they are raw.—My, what a splash!" he added, turning his face in the direction of the river: "that must be a pike. And there's a star falling."

"I say, I can tell you something, brothers," began Kostya in a shrill little voice: "listen what my dad told me the other day."

"Well, we are listening," said Fedya with a patronizing air.

"You know Gavrila, I suppose, the carpenter up in the big village?"

"Yes, we know him."

"And do you know why he is so sorrowful always, never speaks? do you know? I'll tell you why he's so sorrowful; he went one day, daddy said,—he went, brothers, into the forest nutting. So he went nutting into the forest and lost his way; he went on—God only can tell where he got to. So he went on and on, brothers; but 'twas no good! he could not find the way: and so night came on out of doors. So he sat down under a tree. 'I'll wait till morning,' thought he. He sat down and began to drop asleep. So as he was falling asleep, suddenly he heard some one call him. He looked up: there was no one. He fell asleep again; again he was called. He looked and looked again; and in front of him there sat a russalka on a branch, swinging herself and calling him to her, and simply dying with laughing, she laughed so. And the moon was shining bright, so bright, the moon shone so clear,—everything could be seen plain, brothers. So she called him, and she herself was as bright and as white sitting on the branch as some dace or roach, or like some little carp so white and silvery. Gavrila the carpenter almost fainted, brothers; but she laughed without stopping, and kept beckoning him to her like this. Then Gavrila was just getting up; he was just going to yield to the russalka, brothers, but — the Lord put it into his heart, doubtless — he crossed himself, like this. And it was so hard for him to make that cross, brothers: he said, 'My hand was simply like a stone; it would not move.'— Ugh! the horrid witch.— So when he made the cross, brothers, the russalka she left off laughing, and all at once how she did cry. She cried, brothers, and wiped her eyes with her hair, and her hair was green as any hemp. So Gavrila looked and looked at her, and at last he fell to questioning her. 'Why are you weeping, wild thing of the woods?' And the russalka began to speak to him like this: 'If you had not crossed yourself, man,' she says, 'you should have lived with me in gladness of heart to the end of your days; and I weep, I am grieved at heart, because you crossed yourself: but I will not grieve alone; you too shall grieve at heart till the end of your days.' Then she vanished, brothers, and at once it was plain to Gavrila how to get out of the forest. Only since then he goes always sorrowful, as you see."

"Ugh!" said Fedya after a brief silence; "but how can such an evil thing of the woods ruin a Christian soul?— He did not listen to her!"

"And I say!" said Kostya: "Gavrila said that her voice was as shrill and as plaintive as a toad's."

"Did your father tell you that himself?" Fedya went on.

"Yes. I was lying in the loft. I heard it all."

"It's a strange thing. Why should he be sorrowful? But I suppose she liked him, since she called him."

"Ay, she liked him!" put in Ilyusha. "Yes, indeed! she wanted to tickle him to death, that's what she wanted. That's what they do, those russalkas."

"There ought to be russalkas here too, I suppose," observed Fedya.

"No," answered Kostya: "this is a holy open place. There's one thing, though: the river's near."

All were silent. Suddenly from out of the distance came a prolonged, resonant, almost wailing sound,— one of those inexplicable sounds of the night, which break upon a profound stillness, rise upon the air, linger, and slowly die away at last. You listen: it is as though there was nothing, yet it echoes still. It is as though some one had uttered a long, long cry upon the very horizon; as though some other had answered him with shrill harsh laughter in the forest: and a faint, hoarse hissing hovers over the river. The boys looked round about, shivering.

«Christ's aid be with us!» whispered Ilyusha.

«Ah, you craven crows!» cried Pavel, «what are you frightened of? Look, the potatoes are done.» (They all came up to the pot and began to eat the smoking potatoes; only Vanya did not stir.) «Well, aren't you coming?» said Pavel.

But he did not creep out from under his rug. The pot was soon completely emptied.

«Have you heard, boys,» began Ilyusha, «what happened with us at Varnavitsi?»

«Near the dam?» asked Fedya.

«Yes, yes, near the dam, the broken-down dam. That is a haunted place, such a haunted place, and so lonely. All round there are pits and quarries, and there are always snakes in pits.»

«Well, what did happen? Tell us.»

«Well, this is what happened. You don't know, perhaps, Fedya, but there a drowned man was buried; he was drowned long, long ago, when the water was still deep: only his grave can still be seen, though it can only just be seen—like this—a little mound. So one day the bailiff called the huntsman Yermil, and says to him, 'Go to the post, Yermil.' Yermil always goes to the post for us. He has let all his dogs die: they never will live with him, for some reason, and they have never lived with him, though he's a good huntsman, and every one liked him. So Yermil went to the post, and he stayed a bit in the town; and when he rode back, he was a little tipsy. It was night,—a fine night; the moon was shining. So Yermil rode across the dam: his way lay there. So as he rode along, he saw on the drowned man's grave a little lamb, so white and curly and pretty, running about. So Yermil thought, 'I will take him;' and he got down and took him in his arms. But the little lamb didn't take any notice. So Yermil goes back to his horse, and the horse stares at him, and snorts and shakes his head; however, he said 'whoa' to him and sat on him with the lamb, and rode on again; he held the lamb in front of him. He looks at him; and the lamb looks him straight in the face, like this. Yermil the huntsman felt upset. 'I don't remember,' he said, 'that lambs ever look at any one like that;' however, he began to stroke it like this on its wool, and to say, 'Chucky! chucky!' And the lamb suddenly showed its teeth and said too, 'Chucky! chucky!'"

The boy who was telling the story had hardly uttered this last word, when suddenly both dogs got up at once, and barking convulsively, rushed away from the fire and disappeared in the darkness. All the boys were alarmed. Vanya jumped up from under his rug. Pavlusha ran shouting after the dogs. Their barking quickly grew fainter in the distance. There was the noise of the uneasy tramp of the frightened drove of horses. Pavlusha shouted aloud, "Hey Gray! Beetle!" In a few minutes the barking ceased; Pavel's voice sounded still in the distance.

A little time more passed; the boys kept looking about in perplexity, as though expecting something to happen. Suddenly the tramp of a galloping horse was heard; it stopped short at the pile of wood, and hanging on to the mane, Pavel sprang nimbly off it. Both the dogs also leaped into the circle of light, and at once sat down, their red tongues hanging out.

"What was it? what was it?" asked the boys.

"Nothing," answered Pavel, waving his hand to his horse; "I suppose the dogs scented something. I thought it was a wolf," he added, calmly drawing deep breaths into his chest.

I could not help admiring Pavel. He was very fine at that moment. His ugly face, animated by his swift ride, glowed with hardihood and determination. Without even a switch in his hand, he had, without the slightest hesitation, rushed out into the night alone to face a wolf. "What a splendid fellow!" I thought, looking at him.

"Have you seen any wolves, then?" asked the trembling Kostya.

"There are always a good many of them here," answered Pavel; "but they are only troublesome in the winter."

He crouched down again before the fire. As he sat down on the ground, he laid his hand on the shaggy head of one of the dogs. For a long while the flattered brute did not turn his head, gazing sidewise with grateful pride at Pavlusha.

Vanya lay down under his rug again.

"What dreadful things you were telling us, Ilyusha!" began Fedya; whose part it was, as the son of a well-to-do peasant, to lead the conversation. (He spoke little himself, apparently afraid of lowering his dignity.) "And then some evil spirit set the dogs barking. Certainly I have heard that place was haunted."

"Varnavitsi? I should think it was haunted! More than once, they say, they have seen the old master there—the late master. He wears, they say, a long-skirted coat, and keeps groaning like this, and looking for something on the ground. Once grandfather Trofimitch met him. 'What,' says he, 'your Honor, Ivan Ivan'itch, are you pleased to look for on the ground?'"

"He asked him?" put in Fedya in amazement.

"Yes, he asked him."

"Well, I call Trofimitch a brave fellow after that. Well, what did he say?"

"'I am looking for the herb that cleaves all things,' says he. But he speaks so thickly, so thickly.—'And what, your Honor, Ivan Ivan'itch, do you want with the herb that cleaves all things?'—'The tomb weighs on me; it weighs on me, Trofimitch: I want to get away—away.'"

"My word!" observed Fedya: "he didn't enjoy his life enough, I suppose."

"What a marvel!" said Kostya. "I thought one could only see the departed on All Hallows' day."

"One can see the departed any time," Ilyusha interposed with conviction. From what I could observe, I judged he knew the village superstitions better than the others. "But on All Hallows' day you can see the living too; those, that is, whose turn it is to die that year. You need only sit in the church porch, and keep looking at the road. They will come by you along the road; those, that is, who will die that year. Last year old Ulyana went to the porch."

"Well, did she see any one?" asked Kostya inquisitively.

"To be sure she did. At first she sat a long, long while, and saw no one, and heard nothing; only it seemed as if some dog kept whining and whining like this, somewhere. Suddenly she looks up: a boy comes along the road with only a shirt on. She looked at him. It was Ivashka Fedosyev."

"He who died in the spring?" put in Fedya.

"Yes, he. He came along and never lifted up his head. But Ulyana knew him. And then she looks again: a woman came along. She stared and stared at her. Ah, God Almighty! it was herself coming along the road; Ulyana herself."

"Could it be herself?" asked Fedya.

"Yes, by God, herself."

«Well, but she is not dead yet, you know?

«But the year is not over yet. And only look at her: her life hangs on a thread.»

All were still again. Pavel threw a handful of dry twigs on to the fire. They were soon charred by the suddenly leaping flame; they cracked and smoked, and began to contract, curling up their burning ends. Gleams of light in broken flashes glanced in all directions, especially upwards. Suddenly a white dove flew straight into the bright light, fluttered round and round in terror, bathed in the red glow, and disappeared with a whir of its wings.

«It's lost its home, I suppose,» remarked Pavel. «Now it will fly till it gets somewhere where it can rest till dawn.»

«Why, Pavlusha,» said Kostya, «might it not be a just soul flying to heaven?»

Pavel threw another handful of twigs on to the fire.

«Perhaps,» he said at last.

«But tell us, please, Pavlusha,» began Fedya, «what was seen in your parts at Shalamovy at the heavenly portent?» *

«When the sun could not be seen? Yes, indeed.»

«Were you frightened then?»

«Yes; and we weren't the only ones. Our master, though he talked to us beforehand, and said there would be a heavenly portent, yet when it got dark, they say he himself was frightened out of his wits. And in the house-serfs' cottage, the old woman, directly it grew dark, broke all the dishes in the oven with the poker. 'Who will eat now?' she said: 'the last day has come.' So the soup was all running about the place. And in the village there were such tales about among us: that white wolves would run over the earth, and would eat men; that a bird of prey would pounce down on us; and that they would even see Trishka.» †

«What is Trishka?» asked Kostya.

«Why, don't you know?» interrupted Ilyusha warmly. «Why, brother, where have you been brought up, not to know Trishka? You're a stay-at-home, one-eyed lot in your village, really! Trishka will be a marvelous man, who will come one day, and he will be such a marvelous man that they will never be able to catch him, and never be able to do anything with him; he will

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* This is what the peasants call an eclipse.

† The popular belief in Trishka is probably derived from some tradition of Antichrist.

be such a marvelous man. The people will try to take him; for example, they will come after him with sticks, they will surround him, but he will blind their eyes so that they fall upon one another. They will put him in prison, for example: he will ask for a little water to drink in a bowl; they will bring him the bowl, and he will plunge into it and vanish from their sight. They will put chains on him, but he will only clap his hands — they will fall off him. So this Trishka will go through villages and towns; and this Trishka will be a wily man, — he will lead astray Christ's people, and they will be able to do nothing to him. He will be such a marvelous wily man.

"Well, then," continued Pavel, in his deliberate voice, "that's what he's like. And so they expected him in our parts. The old men declared that directly the heavenly portent began, Trishka would come. So the heavenly portent began. All the people were scattered over the street, in the fields, waiting to see what would happen. Our place, you know, is open country. They look: and suddenly down the mountain-side from the big village comes a man of some sort; such a strange man, with such a wonderful head, that all scream, 'Oy, Trishka is coming! Oy, Trishka is coming!' and all run in all directions! Our elder crawled into a ditch; his wife stumbled on the door-board and screamed with all her might; she terrified her yard-dog, so that he broke away from his chain and over the hedge and into the forest; and Kuzka's father, Dorofyitch, ran into the oats, lay down there, and began to cry like a quail. 'Perhaps,' says he, 'the Enemy, the Destroyer of Souls, will spare the birds at least.' So they were all in such a scare! But he that was coming was our cooper Vavila; he had bought himself a new pitcher, and had put the empty pitcher over his head."

All the boys laughed; and again there was a silence for a while, as often happens when people are talking in the open air. I looked out into the solemn, majestic stillness of the night: the dewy freshness of late evening had been succeeded by the dry heat of midnight; the darkness still had long to lie in a soft curtain over the slumbering fields; there was still a long while left before the first whisperings, the first dewdrops of dawn. There was no moon in the heavens: it rose late at that time. Countless golden stars, twinkling in rivalry, seemed all running softly towards the Milky Way; and truly, looking at them, you were almost conscious of the whirling, never-resting motion of the earth. A strange, harsh, painful cry sounded twice together over the river, and a few moments later was repeated farther down.

Kostya shuddered. «What was that?»

«That was a heron's cry,» replied Pavel tranquilly.

«A heron,» repeated Kostya. «And what was it, Pavlusha, I heard yesterday evening?» he added after a short pause: «you perhaps will know.»

«What did you hear?»

«I will tell you what I heard. I was going from Stony Ridge to Shashkino; I went first through our walnut wood, and then passed by a little pool,—you know where there's a sharp turn down to the ravine,—there is a water-pit there, you know; it is quite overgrown with reeds; so I went near this pit, brothers, and suddenly from this came a sound of some one groaning, and piteously, so piteously: 'oo-oo, oo-oo!' I was in such a fright, my brothers: it was late, and the voice was so miserable. I felt as if I should cry myself. What could that have been, eh?»

«It was in that pit the thieves drowned Akim the forester last summer,» observed Pavel; «so perhaps it was his soul lamenting.»

«Oh dear, really, brothers,» replied Kostya, opening wide his eyes, which were round enough before, «I did not know they had drowned Akim in that pit. Shouldn't I have been frightened if I'd known!»

«But they say there are little tiny frogs,» continued Pavel, «who cry piteously like that.»

«Frogs? Oh, no, it was not frogs; certainly not.» (A heron again uttered a cry above the river.) «Ugh, there it is!» Kostya cried involuntarily: «it is just like a wood-spirit shrieking.»

«The wood-spirit does not shriek: it is dumb,» put in Ilyusha; «it only claps its hands and rattles.»

«And have you seen it, then,—the wood-spirit?» Fedya asked him ironically.

«No, I have not seen it, and God preserve me from seeing it; but others have seen it. Why, one day it misled a peasant in our parts, and led him through the woods, and all in a circle in one field. He scarcely got home till daylight.»

«Well, and did he see it?»

«Yes. He says it was a big, big creature, dark, wrapped up, just like a tree: you could not make it out well; it seemed to hide away from the moon, and kept staring and staring with its great eyes, and winking and winking with them."

"Ugh!" exclaimed Fedya, with a slight shiver and a shrug of the shoulders: "pfoo!"

"And how does such an unclean brood come to exist in the world?" said Pavel: "it's a wonder."

"Don't speak ill of it: take care, it will hear you," said Ilyusha.

Again there was a silence.

"Look, look, brothers," suddenly came Vanya's childish voice; "look at God's little stars,—they are swarming like bees!"

He put his fresh little face out from under his rug, leaned on his little fist, and slowly lifted up his large soft eyes The eyes of all the boys were raised to the sky, and they were not lowered quickly.

"Well, Vanya," began Fedya caressingly, "is your sister Anyutka well?"

"Yes, she is very well," replied Vanya with a slight lisp.

"You ask her, why doesn't she come to see us?"

"I don't know."

"You tell her to come."

"Very well."

"Tell her I have a present for her."

"And a present for me too?"

"Yes, you too."

Vanya sighed.

"No; I don't want one. Better give it to her: she is so kind to us at home."

And Vanya laid his head down again on the ground. Pavel got up and took the empty pot in his hand.

"Where are you going?" Fedya asked him.

"To the river, to get water: I want some water to drink."

The dogs got up and followed him.

"Take care you don't fall into the river!" Ilyusha cried after him.

"Why should he fall in?" said Fedya. "He will be careful."

"Yes, he will be careful. But all kinds of things happen: he will stoop over, perhaps, to draw the water, and the water-spirit will clutch him by the hand, and drag him to him. Then they will say, 'The boy fell into the water.' Fell in, indeed!—There, he has crept in among the reeds," he added, listening.

The reeds certainly «shished,» as they call it among us, as they were parted.

«But is it true,» asked Kostya, «that crazy Akulina has been mad ever since she fell into the water?»

«Yes, ever since. How dreadful she is now! But they say she was a beauty before then. The water-spirit bewitched her. I suppose he did not expect they would get her out so soon. So down there at the bottom he bewitched her.»

(I had met this Akulina more than once. Covered with rags, fearfully thin, with face as black as a coal, blear-eyed and for ever grinning, she would stay whole hours in one place in the road, stamping with her feet, pressing her fleshless hands to her breast, and slowly shifting from one leg to the other, like a wild beast in a cage. She understood nothing that was said to her, and only chuckled spasmodically from time to time.)

«But they say,» continued Kostya, «that Akulina threw herself into the river because her lover had deceived her.»

«Yes, that was it.»

«And do you remember Vasya?» added Kostya mournfully.

«What Vasya?» asked Fedya.

«Why, the one who was drowned,» replied Kostya, «in this very river. Ah, what a boy he was! What a boy he was! His mother, Feklista, how she loved him, her Vasya! And she seemed to have a foreboding, Feklista did, that harm would come to him from the water. Sometimes when Vasya went with us boys in the summer to bathe in the river, she used to be trembling all over. The other women did not mind; they passed by with the pails and went on: but Feklista put her pail down on the ground, and set to calling him, 'Come back, come back, my little joy; come back, my darling!' And no one knows how he was drowned. He was playing on the bank, and his mother was there haymaking; suddenly she hears, as though some one was blowing bubbles through the water, and behold! there was only Vasya's little cap to be seen swimming on the water. You know since then Feklista has not been right in her mind: she goes and lies down at the place where he was drowned; she lies down, brothers, and sings a song; — you remember Vasya was always singing a song like that, so she sings it too, and weeps and weeps, and bitterly rails against God.»

«Here is Pavlusha coming,» said Fedya.

Pavel came up to the fire with a full pot in his hand.

« Boys,» he began after a short silence, « something bad happened.»

« Oh, what ?» asked Kostya hurriedly.

« I heard Vasya's voice.»

They all seemed to shudder.

« What do you mean ? What do you mean ?» stammered Kostya.

« I don't know. Only I went to stoop down to the water; suddenly I hear my name called in Vasya's voice, as though it came from below water: 'Pavlusha, Pavlusha, come here.' I came away. But I fetched the water, though.»

«Ah, God have mercy upon us!» said the boys, crossing themselves.

« It was the water-spirit calling you, Pavel,» said Fedya: « we were just talking of Vasya.»

«Ah, it's a bad omen,» said Ilyusha deliberately.

« Well, never mind, don't bother about it,» Pavel declared stoutly, and he sat down again: « no one can escape his fate.»

The boys were still. It was clear that Pavel's words had produced a strong impression on them. They began to lie down before the fire, as though preparing to go to sleep.

« What is that ?» asked Kostya, suddenly lifting his head.

Pavel listened.

« It's the curlews flying and whistling.»

« Where are they flying to ?»

« To a land where, they say, there is no winter.»

« But is there such a land ?»

« Yes.»

« Is it far away ?»

« Far, far away, beyond the warm seas.»

Kostya sighed and shut his eyes.

More than three hours had passed since I first came across the boys. The moon at last had risen; I did not notice it at first, it was such a tiny crescent. This moonless night was as solemn and hushed as it had been at first. But already many stars that not long before had been high up in the heavens, were setting over the earth's dark rim: everything around was perfectly still, as it is only still towards morning; all was sleeping the deep unbroken sleep that comes before daybreak. Already the fragrance in the air was fainter; once more a dew seemed falling.

How short are nights in summer! The boys' talk died down when the fires did. The dogs even were dozing; the horses, so far as I could make out, in the hardly perceptible, faintly shining light of the stars, were asleep with downcast heads. I fell into a state of weary unconsciousness, which passed into sleep.

THE SINGERS

From ‘A Sportsman's Sketches’

When I went into the Welcome Resort, a fairly large party were already assembled there.

In his usual place behind the bar, almost filling up the entire opening in the partition, stood Nikolai Ivan'itch in a striped print shirt; with a lazy smile on his full face, he poured out with his plump white hand two glasses of spirits for the Blinkard and the Gabbler as they came in: behind him, in a corner near the window, could be seen his sharp-eyed wife. In the middle of the room was standing Yashka the Turk,—a thin, graceful fellow of three-and-twenty, dressed in a long-skirted coat of blue nankin. He looked a smart factory hand; and could not, to judge by his appearance, boast of very good health. His hollow cheeks, his large restless gray eyes, his straight nose with its delicate mobile nostrils, his pale-brown curls brushed back over the sloping white brow, his full but beautiful, expressive lips, and his whole face, betrayed a passionate and sensitive nature. He was in a state of great excitement: he blinked, his breathing was hurried, his hands shook as though in fever, and he was really in a fever—that sudden fever of excitement which is so well known to all who have to speak and sing before an audience. Near him stood a man of about forty, with broad shoulders and broad jaws, with a low forehead, narrow Tartar eyes, a short flat nose, a square chin, and shining black hair coarse as bristles. The expression of his face—a swarthy face, with a sort of leaden hue in it—and especially of his pale lips, might almost have been called savage, if it had not been so still and dreamy. He hardly stirred a muscle; he only looked slowly about him like a bull under the yoke. He was dressed in a sort of surtout, not over new, with smooth brass buttons; an old black-silk handkerchief was twisted round his immense neck. He was called the Wild Master.

Right opposite him, on a bench under the holy pictures, was sitting Yashka's rival, the booth-keeper from Zhizdry; he was a short, stoutly built man about thirty, pock-marked and curly-headed, with a blunt, turn-up nose, lively brown eyes, and a scanty beard. He looked keenly about him; and sitting with his hands under him, he kept carelessly swinging his legs and tapping with his feet, which were encased in stylish top-boots with a colored edging. He wore a new thin coat of gray cloth, — with a plush collar in sharp contrast with the crimson shirt below,— buttoned close across the chest. In the opposite corner, to the right of the door, a peasant sat at the table in a narrow, shabby smock-frock, with a huge rent on the shoulder. The sunlight fell in a narrow, yellowish streak through the dusty panes of the two small windows, but it seemed as if it struggled in vain with the habitual darkness of the room: all the objects in it were dimly — as it were patchily — lighted up. On the other hand, it was almost cool in the room; and the sense of stifling heat dropped off me like a weary load directly I crossed the threshold.

My entrance, I could see, was at first somewhat disconcerting to Nikolai Ivan'itch's customers; but observing that he greeted me as a friend, they were reassured, and took no more notice of me. I asked for some beer, and sat down in the corner, near the peasant in the ragged smock.

"Well, well," piped the Gabbler, suddenly draining a glass of spirits at one gulp, and accompanying his exclamation with the strange gesticulations without which he seemed unable to utter a single word: "what are we waiting for? If we're going to begin, then begin. Hey, Yashka?"

"Begin, begin," chimed in Nikolai Ivan'itch approvingly.

"Let's begin, by all means," observed the boothkeeper coolly, with a self-confident smile: «I'm ready.»

«And I'm ready,» Yakov pronounced in a voice thrilled with excitement.

« Well, begin, lads,» whined the Blinkard. But in spite of the unanimously expressed desire, neither began; the booth-keeper did not even get up from the bench: they all seemed to be waiting for something.

« Begin! » said the Wild Master sharply and sullenly. Yashka started. The booth-keeper pulled down his girdle and cleared his throat.

« But who's to begin? » he inquired in a slightly changed voice, of the Wild Master, who still stood motionless in the middle of the room, his stalwart legs wide apart, and his powerful arms thrust up to the elbow into his breeches pockets.

« You, you, booth-keeper,» stammered the Gabbler; «you, to be sure, brother.»

The Wild Master looked at him from under his brows. The Gabbler gave a faint squeak, in confusion looked away at the ceiling, twitched his shoulder, and said no more.

« Cast lots,» the Wild Master pronounced emphatically; «and the pot on the table.»

Nikolai Ivan'itch bent down, and with a gasp picked up the pot of beer from the floor, and set it on the table.

The Wild Master glanced at Yakov, and said, « Come.»

Yakov fumbled in his pockets, took out a halfpenny, and marked it with his teeth. The booth-keeper pulled from under the skirts of his long coat a new leather purse, deliberately untied the string, and shaking out a quantity of small change into his hand, picked out a new halfpenny. The Gabbler held out his dirty cap, with its broken peak hanging loose; Yakov dropped his halfpenny in, and the booth-keeper his.

« You must pick out one,» said the Wild Master, turning to the Blinkard.

The Blinkard smiled complacently, took the cap in both hands, and began shaking it.

For an instant a profound silence reigned; the halfpennies clinked faintly, jingling against each other. I looked around attentively: every face wore an expression of intense expectation; the Wild Master himself showed signs of uneasiness; my neighbor even, the peasant in the tattered smock, craned his neck inquisitively. The Blinkard put his hand into the cap and took out the booth-keeper's halfpenny; every one drew a long breath. Yakov flushed, and the booth-keeper passed his hand over his hair.

« There, I said you'd begin,» cried the Gabbler; « didn't I say so? »

« There, there, don't cluck,» remarked the Wild Master contemptuously. « Begin,» he went on, with a nod to the booth-keeper.

« What song am I to sing? » asked the booth-keeper, beginning to be nervous.

"What you choose," answered the Blinkard; "sing what you think best."

"What you choose, to be sure," Nikolai Ivan'itch chimed in, slowly smoothing his hand on his breast; "you're quite at liberty about that. Sing what you like; only sing well: and we'll give a fair decision afterwards."

"A fair decision, of course," put in the Gabbler, licking the edge of his empty glass.

"Let me clear my throat a bit, mates," said the booth-keeper, fingering the collar of his coat.

"Come, come, no nonsense — begin!" protested the Wild Master, and he looked down.

The booth-keeper thought a minute, shook his head, and stepped forward. Yakov's eyes were riveted upon him.

But before I enter upon a description of the contest itself, I think it will not be amiss to say a few words about each of the personages taking part in my story. The lives of some of them were known to me already when I met them in the Welcome Resort; I collected some facts about the others later on.

Let us begin with the Gabbler. This man's real name was Evgraf Ivanovitch; but no one in the whole neighborhood knew him as anything but the Gabbler, and he himself referred to himself by that nickname, so well did it fit him. Indeed, nothing could have been more appropriate to his insignificant, ever-restless features. He was a dissipated, unmarried house-serf, whose own masters had long ago got rid of him; and who, without any employment, without earning a halfpenny, found means to get drunk every day at other people's expense. He had a great number of acquaintances who treated him to drinks of spirits and tea, though they could not have said why they did so themselves; for far from being entertaining in company, he bored every one with his meaningless chatter, his insufferable familiarity, his spasmodic gestures, and incessant, unnatural laugh. He could neither sing nor dance; he had never said a clever or even a sensible thing in his life; he chattered away, telling lies about everything — a regular Gabbler! And yet not a single drinking-party for thirty miles around took place without his lank figure turning up among the guests; so that they were used to him by now, and put up with his presence as a necessary evil. They all, it is true, treated him with contempt; but the Wild Master was the only one who knew how to keep his foolish sallies in check.

The Blinkard was not in the least like the Gabbler. His nickname, too, suited him, though he was no more given to blinking than other people: it is a well-known fact that the Russian peasants have a talent for finding good nicknames. In spite of my endeavors to get more detailed information about this man's past, many passages in his life have remained spots of darkness to me, and probably to many other people: episodes buried, as the bookmen say, in the darkness of oblivion. I could only find out that he was once a coachman in the service of an old childless lady; that he had run away with three horses he was in charge of; had been lost for a whole year: and, no doubt convinced by experience of the drawbacks and hardships of a wandering life, he had gone back, a cripple, and flung himself at his mistress's feet. He succeeded in a few years in smoothing over his offense by his exemplary conduct; and gradually getting higher in her favor, at last gained her complete confidence, was made a bailiff, and on his mistress's death turned out — in what way was never known — to have received his freedom. He got admitted into the class of tradesmen; rented patches of market garden from the neighbors; grew rich, and now was living in ease and comfort. He was a man of experience, who knew on which side his bread was buttered; was more actuated by prudence than by either good or ill nature; had knocked about, understood men, and knew how to turn them to his own advantage. He was cautious, and at the same time enterprising, like a fox; though he was as fond of gossip as an old woman, he never let out his own affairs, while he made every one else talk freely of theirs. He did not affect to be a simpleton, though, as so many crafty men of his sort do: indeed, it would have been difficult for him to take any one in, in that way; I have never seen a sharper, keener pair of eyes than his tiny cunning little «peepers,» as they call them in Orel. They were never simply looking about; they were always looking one up and down and through and through. The Blinkard would sometimes ponder for weeks together over some apparently simple undertaking; and again he would suddenly decide on a desperately bold line of action, which one would fancy would bring him to ruin. But it would be sure to turn out all right: everything would go smoothly. He was lucky, and believed in his own luck, and believed in omens. He was exceedingly superstitious in general. He was not liked, because he would have nothing much to do with any one; but he was respected. His whole family consisted of one little son, whom he idolized, and who, brought up by such a father, is likely to get on in the world. "Little Blinkard 'll be his father over again," is said of him already, in undertones, by the old men, as they sit on their mud walls gossiping on summer evenings; and every one knows what that means,—there is no need to say more.

As to Yashka the Turk, and the booth-keeper, there is no need to say much about them. Yakov — called the Turk because he actually was descended from a Turkish woman, a prisoner from the war — was by nature an artist in every sense of the word; and by calling, a ladler in a paper factory belonging to a merchant. As for the booth-keeper, his career, I must own, I know nothing of; he struck me as being a smart townsman of the tradesman class, ready to turn his hand to anything. But the Wild Master calls for a more detailed account.

The first impression the sight of this man produced on you was a sense of coarse, heavy, irresistible power. He was clumsily built,— a "shambler," as they say about us: but there was an air of triumphant vigor about him; and strange to say, his bear-like figure was not without a certain grace of its own, proceeding perhaps from his absolutely placid confidence in his own strength. It was hard to decide at first to what class this Hercules belonged: he did not look like a house-serf, nor a tradesman, nor an impoverished clerk out of work, nor a small ruined land-owner such as takes to being a huntsman or a fighting man: he was, in fact, quite individual. No one knew where he came from, or what brought him into our district: it was said that he came of free peasant-proprietor stock, and had once been in the government service somewhere, but nothing positive was known about this; and indeed there was no one from whom one could learn,— certainly not from him: he was the most silent and morose of men. So much so that no one knew for certain what he lived on: he followed no trade, visited no one, associated with scarcely any one; yet he had money to spend; little enough, it is true, still he had some. In his behavior he was not exactly retiring — retiring was not a word that could be applied to him: he lived as though he noticed no one about him, and cared for no one. The Wild Master (that was the nickname they had given him; his real name was Perevlyesov) enjoyed an immense influence in the whole district: he was obeyed with eager promptitude, though he had no kind of right to give orders to any one, and did not himself evince the slightest pretension to authority over the people with whom he came into casual contact. He spoke—they obeyed: strength always has an influence of its own. He scarcely drank at all, had nothing to do with women, and was passionately fond of singing. There was much that was mysterious about this man: it seemed as though vast forces sullenly reposed within him, knowing as it were, that once roused, once bursting free, they were bound to crush him and everything they came in contact with. And I am greatly mistaken if in this man's life there had not been some such outbreak; if it was not owing to the lessons of experience, to a narrow escape from ruin, that he now kept himself so tightly in hand. What especially struck me in him was the combination of a sort of inborn natural ferocity with an equally inborn generosity,—a combination I have never met in any other man.

And so the booth-keeper stepped forward; and half shutting his eyes, began singing in high falsetto. He had a fairly sweet and pleasant voice, though rather hoarse; he played with his voice like a woodlark, twisting and turning it in incessant roulades and trills up and down the scale,—continually returning to the highest notes, which he held and prolonged with special care. Then he would break off, and again suddenly take up the first motive with a sort of go-ahead daring. His modulations were at times rather bold, at times rather comical: they would have given a connoisseur great satisfaction, and have made a German furiously indignant. He was a Russian *tenore di grazia*, *ténor léger*. He sang a song to a lively dance-tune; the words of which—all that I could catch through the endless maze of variations, ejaculations, and repetitions—were as follows:—

«A tiny patch of land, young lass,
I'll plow for thee,
And tiny crimson flowers, young lass,
I'll sow for thee.»

He sang: all listened to him with great attention. He seemed to feel that he had to do with really musical people, and therefore was exerting himself to do his best. And they really are musical in our part of the country: the village of Sergievskoe on the Orel high-road is deservedly noted throughout Russia for its harmonious chorus singing. The booth-keeper sang for a long while without evoking much enthusiasm in his audience,—he lacked the support of a chorus; but at last, after one particularly bold flourish, which set even the Wild Master smiling, the Gabbler could not refrain from a shout of delight. Every one was roused. The Gabbler and the Blinkard began joining in in an undertone, and exclaiming, «Bravely done! Take it, you rogue! Sing it out, you serpent! Hold it! That shake again, you dog you! May Herod confound your soul!» and so on. Nikolai Ivan'itch behind the bar was nodding his head from side to side approvingly. The Gabbler at last was swinging his legs, tapping with his feet and twitching his shoulder; while Yashka's eyes fairly glowed like coals, and he trembled all over like a leaf, and smiled nervously. The Wild Master alone did not change countenance, and stood motionless as before; but his eyes, fastened on the booth-keeper, looked somewhat softened, though the expression of his lips was still scornful. Emboldened by the signs of general approbation, the booth-keeper went off in a whirl of flourishes; and began to round off such trills, to turn such shakes off his tongue, and to make such furious play with his throat, that when at last, pale, exhausted, and bathed in hot perspiration, he uttered the last dying note, his whole body flung back, a general united shout greeted him in a violent outburst. The Gabbler threw himself on his neck, and began strangling him in his long bony arms; a flush came out on Nikolai Ivan'itch's oily face, and he seemed to have grown younger; Yashka shouted like mad, «Capital, capital!» Even my neighbor, the peasant in the torn smock, could not restrain himself; and with a blow of his fist on the table he cried, «Aha! well done, damn my soul, well done!» And he spat on one side with an air of decision.

«Well, brother, you've given us a treat!» bawled the Gabbler, not releasing the exhausted booth-keeper from his embraces; «you've given us a treat, there's no denying! You've won, brother, you've won! I congratulate you—the quart's yours! Yashka's miles behind you, I tell you; miles—take my word for it.» And again he hugged the booth-keeper to his breast.

«There, let him alone, let him alone; there's no being rid of you,» said the Blinkard with vexation; «let him sit down on the bench; he's tired, see.—You're a ninny, brother, a perfect ninny! What are you sticking to him like a wet leaf for?»

«Well, then, let him sit down, and I'll drink to his health,» said the Gabbler, and he went up to the bar. «At your expense, brother,» he added, addressing the booth-keeper.

The latter nodded, sat down on the bench, pulled a piece of cloth out of his cap, and began wiping his face; while the Gabbler, with greedy haste, emptied his glass, and with a grunt, assumed, after the manner of confirmed drinkers, an expression of careworn melancholy.

« You sing beautifully, brother, beautifully,» Nikolai Ivan'itch observed caressingly. «And now it's your turn, Yashka; mind, now, don't be afraid. We shall see who's who; we shall see. The booth-keeper sings beautifully, though; 'pon my soul, he does.»

« Very beautifully,» observed Nikolai Ivan'itch's wife, and she looked with a smile at Yakov.

« Beautifully, ha! » repeated my neighbor in an undertone.

«Ah, a wild man of the woods! » the Gabbler vociferated suddenly; and going up to the peasant with the rent on his shoulder, he pointed at him with his finger, while he pranced about and went off into an insulting guffaw. « Ha! ha! get along! wild man of the woods! Here's a ragamuffin from Woodland village! What brought you here?» he bawled amidst laughter.

The poor peasant was abashed, and was just about to get up and make off as fast as he could, when suddenly the Wild Master's iron voice was heard:—

« What does the insufferable brute mean?» he articulated, grinding his teeth.

« I wasn't doing nothing,» muttered the Gabbler. « I didn't—I only—»

« There, all right, shut up! » retorted the Wild Master. « Yakov, begin! »

Yakov took himself by his throat:—

« Well, really, brothers— Something— H'm, I don't know, on my word, what—»

« Come, that's enough; don't be timid. For shame! why go back? Sing the best you can, by God's gift.»

And the Wild Master looked down expectant. Yakov was silent for a minute; he glanced round, and covered his face with his hand. All had their eyes simply fastened upon him; especially the booth-keeper, on whose face a faint, involuntary uneasiness could be seen through his habitual expression of self-confidence and the triumph of his success. He leant back against the wall, and again put both hands under him, but did not swing his legs as before. When at last Yakov uncovered his face, it was pale as a dead man's; his eyes gleamed faintly under their drooping lashes. He gave a deep sigh, and began to sing. The first sound of his voice was faint and unequal, and seemed not to come from his chest, but to be wafted from somewhere afar off, as though it had floated by chance into the room. A strange effect was produced on all of us by this trembling, resonant note: we glanced at one another, and Nikolai Ivan'itch's wife seemed to draw herself up. This first note was followed by another, bolder and prolonged, but still obviously quivering—like a harpstring, when, suddenly struck by a stray finger, it throbs in a last swiftly dying tremble; the second was followed by a third; and gradually gaining fire and breadth, the strains swelled into a pathetic melody.

"Not one little path ran into the field," he sang; and sweet and mournful it was in our ears. I have seldom, I must confess, heard a voice like it: it was slightly hoarse, and not perfectly true; there was even something morbid about it at first: but it had genuine depth of passion, and youth and sweetness, and a sort of fascinating, careless, pathetic melancholy. A spirit of truth and fire, a Russian spirit, was sounding and breathing in that voice; and it seemed to go straight to your heart,—to go straight to all that was Russian in it. The song swelled and flowed. Yakov was clearly carried away by enthusiasm: he was not timid now; he surrendered himself wholly to the rapture of his art: his voice no longer trembled; it quivered, but with the scarce perceptible inward quiver of passion, which pierces like an arrow to the very soul of the listeners: and he steadily gained strength and firmness and breadth. I remember I once saw at sunset on a flat sandy shore, when the tide was low and the sea's roar came weighty and menacing from the distance, a great white sea-gull; it sat motionless, its silky bosom facing the crimson glow of the setting sun, and only now and then opening wide its great wings to greet the well-known sea, to greet the sinking lurid sun: I recalled it, as I heard Yakov. He sang, utterly forgetful of his rival and all of us; he seemed supported, as a bold swimmer by the waves, by our silent, passionate sympathy. He sang, and in every sound of his voice one seemed to feel something dear and akin to us; something of breadth and space, as though the familiar steppes were unfolding before our eyes and stretching away into endless distance.

I felt the tears gathering in my bosom and rising to my eyes; suddenly I was struck by dull, smothered sobs. I looked round;

the innkeeper's wife was weeping, her bosom pressed close to the window. Yakov threw a quick glance at her, and he sang more sweetly, more melodiously than ever; Nikolai Ivan'itch looked down; the Blinkard turned away; the Gabbler, quite touched, stood, his gaping mouth stupidly open; the humble peasant was sobbing softly in the corner, and shaking his head with a plaintive murmur; on the iron visage of the Wild Master, from under his overhanging brows, there slowly rolled a heavy tear; the booth-keeper raised his clenched fist to his brow, and did not stir. I don't know how the general emotion would have ended, if Yakov had not come to a full stop on a high, exceptionally shrill note—as though his voice had broken. No one called out, or even stirred: every one seemed to be waiting to see whether he was not going to sing more; but he opened his eyes as though wondering at our silence, looked round at all of us with a face of inquiry, and saw that the victory was his.

«Yasha,» said the Wild Master, laying his hand on his shoulder—and he could say no more.

We all stood, as it were, petrified. The booth-keeper softly rose and went up to Yakov.

«You—yours—you've won,» he articulated at last with an effort; and rushed out of the room. His rapid, decided action, as it were, broke the spell: we all suddenly fell into noisy, delighted talk. The Gabbler bounded up and down, stammered, and brandished his arms like mill sails; the Blinkard limped up to Yakov and began kissing him; Nikolai Ivan'itch got up and solemnly announced that he would add a second pot of beer from himself. The Wild Master laughed a sort of kind, simple laugh, which I should never have expected to see on his face; the humble peasant, as he wiped his eyes, cheeks, nose, and beard on his sleeves, kept repeating in his corner, «Ah, beautiful it was, by God! blast me for the son of a dog, but it was fine!» while Nikolai Ivan'itch's wife, her face red with weeping, got up quickly and went away. Yakov was enjoying his triumph like a child: his whole face was transformed, his eyes especially fairly glowed with happiness. They dragged him to the bar; he beckoned the weeping peasant up to it, and sent the innkeeper's little son to look after the booth-keeper, who was not found. however: and the festivities began. «You'll sing to us again; you're going to sing to us till evening,» the Gabbler declared, flourishing his hands in the air.

I took one more look at Yakov, and went out. I did not want to stay — I was afraid of spoiling the impression I had received. But the heat was as insupportable as before. It seemed hanging in a thick, heavy layer right over the earth; over the dark-blue sky, tiny bright fires seemed whisking through the finest, almost black dust. Everything was still; and there was something hopeless and oppressive in this profound hush of exhausted nature. I made my way to a hay-loft, and lay down on the fresh-cut but already almost dry grass. For a long while I could not go to sleep; for a long while Yakov's irresistible voice was ringing in my ears. At last the heat and fatigue regained their sway, however, and I fell into a dead sleep. When I waked up, everything was in darkness: the hay scattered around smelt strong and was slightly damp; through the slender rafters of the half-open roof, pale stars were faintly twinkling. I went out. The glow of sunset had long died away, and its last trace showed in a faint light on the horizon; but above the freshness of the night there was still a feeling of heat in the atmosphere, lately baked through by the sun, and the breast still craved a draught of cool air. There was no wind, nor were there any clouds; the sky all round was clear and transparently dark, softly glimmering with innumerable but scarcely visible stars.

There were lights twinkling about the village; from the flaring tavern close by rose a confused, discordant din, amid which I fancied I recognized the voice of Yakov. Violent laughter came from there in an outburst at times. I went up to the little window and pressed my face against the pane. I saw a cheerless, though varied and animated scene. All were drunk — all from Yakov upwards. With breast bared, he sat on a bench, and singing in a thick voice a street song to a dance-tune, he lazily fingered and strummed on the strings of a guitar. His moist hair hung in tufts over his fearfully pale face. In the middle of the room, the Gabbler, completely «screwed» and without his coat, was hopping about in a dance before the peasant in the gray smock: the peasant, on his side, was with difficulty stamping and scraping with his feet, and grinning meaninglessly over his disheveled beard; he waved one hand from time to time, as much as to say, «Here goes!» Nothing could be more ludicrous than his face; however much he twitched up his eyebrows, his heavy lids would hardly rise, but seemed lying upon his scarcely visible, dim, and mawkish eyes. He was in that amiable frame of mind of a perfectly intoxicated man, when every passer-by, directly he looks him in the face, is sure to say, « Bless you, brother, bless you! » The Blinkard, as red as a lobster, and his nostrils dilated wide, was laughing malignantly in a corner; only Nikolai Ivan'itch, as befits a good tavern-keeper, preserved his composure unchanged. The room was thronged with many new faces; but the Wild Master I did not see in it.

I turned away with rapid steps, and began descending the hill on which Kolotovka lies. At the foot of this hill stretches a wide plain; plunged in the misty waves of the evening haze, it seemed more immense, and was, as it were, merged in the darkening sky. I walked with long strides along the road by the ravine, when all at once from somewhere far away in the plain came a boy's clear voice: «Antropka! Antropka-a-a! » He shouted in obstinate and tearful desperation, with long, long drawing out of the last syllable.

He was silent for a few instants, and started shouting again. His voice rang out clear in the still, lightly slumbering air. Thirty times at least he had called the name Antropka; when suddenly, from the farthest end of the plain, as though from another world, there floated a scarcely audible reply:—

« Wha-a-t? »

The boy's voice shouted back at once with gleeful exasperation:—

« Come here, devil! woo-od imp! »

« What fo-or? » replied the other, after a long interval.

« Because dad wants to thrash you! » the first voice shouted back hurriedly.

The second voice did not call back again, and the boy fell to shouting «Antropka» once more. His cries, fainter and less and less frequent, still floated up to my ears, when it had grown completely dark, and I had turned the corner of the wood which skirts my village, and lies over three miles from Kolotovka. «Antropka-a-a! » was still audible in the air, filled with the shadows of night.

A LIVING RELIC

From ‹A Sportsman's Sketches›

The same day we made our way to my mother's peasant settlement,—the existence of which, I must confess, I had not even suspected till then. At this settlement, it turned out, there was a little lodge. It was very old, but as it had not been inhabited, it was clean: I passed a fairly tranquil night in it.

The next day I woke up very early. The sun had only just risen; there was not a single cloud in the sky; everything around shone with a double brilliance,—the brightness of the fresh morning rays and of yesterday's downpour. While they were harnessing me a cart, I went for a stroll about a small orchard, now neglected and run wild, which inclosed the little lodge on all sides with its fragrant, sappy growth. Ah, how sweet it was in the open air, under the bright sky, where the larks were trilling, whence their bell-like notes rained down like silvery beads! On their wings, doubtless, they had carried off drops of dew, and their songs seemed steeped in dew. I took my cap off my head and drew a glad deep breath. On the slope of a shallow ravine, close to the hedge, could be seen a beehive; a narrow path led to it, winding like a snake between dense walls of high grass and nettles, above which struggled up, God knows whence brought, the pointed stalks of dark-green hemp.

I turned along this path; I reached the beehive. Beside it stood a little wattled shanty, where they put the beehives for the winter. I peeped into the half-open door: it was dark, still, dry, within; there was a scent of mint and balm. In the corner were some trestles fitted together, and on them, covered with a quilt, a little figure of some sort. I was walking away—

«Master, master! Piotr Petrovitch!» I heard a voice, faint, slow, and hoarse, like the whispering of marsh rushes.

I stopped.

«Piotr Petrovitch! Come in, please!» the voice repeated. It came from the corner where were the trestles I had noticed.

I drew near, and was struck dumb with amazement. Before me lay a living human being; but what sort of a creature was it?

A head utterly withered, of a uniform coppery hue—like some very ancient holy picture, yellow with age; a sharp nose like a keen-edged knife; the lips could barely be seen — only the teeth flashed white, and the eyes; and from under the kerchief some thin wisps of yellow hair straggled on to the forehead. At the chin, where the quilt was folded, two tiny hands of the same coppery hue were moving, the fingers slowly twitching like little sticks. I looked more intently: the face, far from being ugly, was positively beautiful, but strange and dreadful; and the face seemed the more dreadful to me that on it, on its metallic cheeks, I saw struggling — struggling and unable to form itself — a smile.

"You don't recognize me, master?" whispered the voice again: it seemed to be breathed from the almost unmoving lips. "And indeed, how should you? I'm Lukerya. Do you remember who used to lead the dance at your mother's, at Spasskoye? Do you remember I used to be leader of the choir too?"

"Lukerya!" I cried. "Is it you? Can it be?"

"Yes, it's I, master — I, Lukerya."

I did not know what to say, and gazed in stupefaction at the dark motionless face, with the clear, death-like eyes fastened upon me. Was it possible? This mummy Lukerya — the greatest beauty in all our household — that tall, plump, pink-and-white, singing, laughing, dancing creature! Lukerya, our smart Lukerya, whom all our lads were courting, for whom I heaved some secret sighs — I, a boy of sixteen!

"Mercy, Lukerya!" I said at last: "what is it has happened to you?"

"Oh, such a misfortune befell me! But don't mind me, sir; don't let my trouble revolt you: sit there on that little tub; — a little nearer, or you won't be able to hear me. I've not much of a voice nowadays! Well, I am glad to see you! What brought you to Aleksyevka?"

Lukerya spoke very softly and feebly, but without pausing.

"Yermolaï the huntsman brought me here. But you tell me — "

"Tell you about my trouble? Certainly, sir. It happened to me a long while ago now — six or seven years. I had only just been betrothed then to Vassily Polyakov — do you remember, such a fine-looking fellow he was, with curly hair? — he waited at table at your mother's. But you weren't in the country then; you had gone away to Moscow to your studies. We were very much in love, Vassily and me; I could never get him out of my head: and it was in the spring it all happened. Well, one night — not long before sunrise, it was — I couldn't sleep: a nightingale in the garden was singing so wonderfully sweet! I could not help getting up and going out on to the steps to listen. It trilled and trilled; and all at once I fancied some one called me — it seemed like Vassya's voice — so softly: 'Lusha!' I looked round; and being half asleep, I suppose, I missed my footing and fell straight down from the top step, and flop on to the ground! And I thought I wasn't much hurt, for I got up directly and went back to my room. Only it seems something inside me — in my body — was broken. Let me get my breath — half a minute — sir."

Lukerya ceased, and I looked at her with surprise. What surprised me particularly was that she told her story almost cheerfully, without sighs and groans, not complaining nor asking for sympathy.

"Ever since that happened," Lukerya went on, "I began to pine away and get thin; my skin got dark; walking was difficult for me; and then — I lost the use of my legs altogether; I couldn't stand or sit; I had to lie down all the time. And I didn't care to eat or drink: I got worse and worse. Your mamma, in the kindness of her heart, made me see doctors, and sent me to a hospital. But there was no curing me. And not one doctor could even say what my illness was. What didn't they do to me? — they burnt my spine with hot irons, they put me in lumps of ice, and it was all no good. I got quite numb in the end. So the gentlemen decided it was no use doctoring me any more, and there was no sense in keeping cripples up at the great house; well, and so they sent me here — because I've relations here. So here I live, as you see."

Lukerya was silent again, and again she tried to smile.

"But this is awful — your position!" I cried; and not knowing how to go on, I asked, "and what of Vassily Polyakov?" A most stupid question it was.

Lukerya turned her eyes a little away.

"What of Polyakov? He grieved — he grieved for a bit — and he is married to another, a girl from Glinnoe. Do you know Glinnoe? It's not far from us. Her name's Agrafena. He loved me dearly — but you see, he's a young man: he couldn't stay a bachelor. And what sort of a helpmeet could I be? The wife he found for himself is a good, sweet woman — and they have children. He lives here; he's a clerk at a neighbor's; your mamma let him go off with a passport, and he's doing very well, praise God.»

«And so you go on lying here all the time?» I asked again.

«Yes, sir, I've been lying here seven years. In the summer-time I lie here in this shanty, and when it gets cold they move me out into the bath-house: I lie there.»

«Who waits on you? Does any one look after you?»

«Oh, there are kind folks here as everywhere; they don't desert me. Yes, they see to me a little. As to food, I eat nothing to speak of: but water is here in the pitcher; it's always kept full of pure spring water. I can reach to the pitcher myself: I've one arm still of use. There's a little girl here, an orphan; now and then she comes to see me, the kind child. She was here just now. You didn't meet her? Such a pretty, fair little thing. She brings me flowers. We've some in the garden — there were some, but they've all disappeared. But you know, wild flowers too are nice; they smell even sweeter than garden flowers. Lilies of the valley, now — what could be sweeter?»

«And aren't you dull and miserable, my poor Lukerya?»

«Why, what is one to do? I wouldn't tell a lie about it. At first it was very wearisome: but later on I got used to it, I got more patient — it was nothing; there are others worse off still.»

«How do you mean?»

«Why, some haven't a roof to shelter them, and there are some blind or deaf; while I, thank God, have splendid sight, and hear everything — everything. If a mole burrows in the ground — I hear even that. And I can smell every scent, even the faintest! When the buckwheat comes into flower in the meadow, or the lime-tree in the garden — I don't need to be told of it, even; I'm the first to know directly. Anyway, if there's the least bit of a wind blowing from that quarter. No, he who stirs God's wrath is far worse off than me. Look at this, again: any one in health may easily fall into sin; but I'm cut off even from sin. The other day, Father Aleksy, the priest, came to give me the sacrament, and he says, 'There's no need,' says he, 'to confess you: you can't fall into sin in your condition, can you?' But I said to him, 'How about sinning in thought, father?' 'Ah, well,' says he, and he laughed himself, 'that's no great sin.' But I fancy I'm no great sinner even in that way, in thought,» Lukerya went on; «for I've trained myself not to think, and above all, not to remember. The time goes faster.»

I must own I was astonished. « You're always alone, Lukerya: how can you prevent the thoughts from coming into your head? or are you constantly asleep? »

« Oh, no, sir! I can't always sleep. Though I've no great pain, still I've an ache, there,—right inside,—and in my bones too; it won't let me sleep as I ought. No; but there, I lie by myself; I lie here and lie here, and don't think: I feel that I'm alive, I breathe; and I put myself all into that. I look and listen. The bees buzz and hum in the hive; a dove sits on the roof and cooes; a hen comes along with her chickens to peck up crumbs; or a sparrow flies in, or a butterfly—that's a great treat for me. Last year some swallows even built a nest over there in the corner, and brought up their little ones. Oh, how interesting it was! One would fly to the nest, press close, feed a young one, and off again. Look again: the other would be in her place already. Sometimes it wouldn't fly in, but only fly past the open door; and the little ones would begin to squawk, and open their beaks directly. I was hoping for them back again the next year, but they say a sportsman here shot them with his gun. And what could he gain by it? It's hardly bigger, the swallow, than a beetle. What wicked men you are, you sportsmen! »

« I don't shoot swallows, » I hastened to remark.

« And once, » Lukerya began again, « it was comical, really. A hare ran in; it did, really! The hounds, I suppose, were after it; anyway, it seemed to tumble straight in at the door! It squatted quite near me, and sat so a long while; it kept sniffing with its nose, and twitching its whiskers—like a regular officer! and it looked at me. It understood, to be sure, that I was no danger to it. At last it got up, went hop-hop to the door, looked round in the doorway; and what did it look like? Such a funny fellow it was! »

Lukerya glanced at me, as much as to say, « Wasn't it funny? » To satisfy her, I laughed. She moistened her parched lips.

« Well, in the winter, of course, I'm worse off, because it's dark: to burn a candle would be a pity, and what would be the use? I can read, to be sure, and was always fond of reading; but what could I read? There are no books of any kind; and even if there were, how could I hold a book? Father Aleksy brought me a calendar to entertain me; but he saw it was no good, so he took and carried it away again. But even though it's dark, there's always something to listen to: a cricket chirps, or a mouse begins scratching somewhere. That's when it's a good thing—not to think!—

"And I repeat the prayers too," Lukerya went on, after taking breath a little; "only I don't know many of them—the prayers, I mean. And besides, why should I weary the Lord God? What can I ask him for? He knows better than I what I need. He has laid a cross upon me: that means that he loves me. So we are commanded to understand. I repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Hymn to the Virgin, the Supplication of all the Afflicted, and I lie still again, without any thought at all, and am all right!"

Two minutes passed by. I did not break the silence, and did not stir on the narrow tub which served me as a seat. The cruel stony stillness of the living, unlucky creature lying before me communicated itself to me; I too turned, as it were, numb.

"Listen, Lukerya," I began at last; "listen to the suggestion I'm going to make to you. Would you like me to arrange for them to take you to a hospital—a good hospital in the town? Who knows—perhaps you might yet be cured; anyway, you would not be alone."

Lukerya's eyebrows fluttered faintly. "Oh, no, sir," she answered in a troubled whisper: "don't move me into a hospital; don't touch me. I shall only have more agony to bear there! How could they cure me now? Why, there was a doctor came here once; he wanted to examine me. I begged him for Christ's sake not to disturb me. It was no use. He began turning me over, pounding my hands and legs, and pulling me about. He said, 'I'm doing this for science; I'm a servant of science—a scientific man! And you,' he said, 'really oughtn't to oppose me, because I've a medal given me for my labors, and it's for you simpletons I'm toiling.' He mauled me about, told me the name of my disease—some wonderful long name—and with that he went away; and all my poor bones ached for a week after. You say I'm all alone; always alone. Oh, no, I'm not always: they come to see me. I'm quiet—I don't bother them. The peasant girls come in and chat a bit; a pilgrim woman will wander in, and tell me tales of Jerusalem, of Kiev, of the holy towns. And I'm not afraid of being alone. Indeed, it's better—ay, ay! Master, don't touch me, don't take me to the hospital. Thank you, you are kind: only don't touch me, there's a dear!"

"Well, as you like, as you like, Lukerya. You know I only suggested it for your good."

"I know, master, that it was for my good. But master dear, who can help another? Who can enter into his soul? Every man must help himself!—You won't believe me, perhaps: I lie here sometimes so alone; and it's as though there were no one else in the world but me. As if I alone were living! And it seems to me as though something were blessing me. I'm carried away by dreams that are really marvelous!"

"What do you dream of, then, Lukerya?"

"That too, master, I couldn't say: one can't explain. Besides, one forgets afterwards. It's like a cloud coming over and bursting; then it grows so fresh and sweet: but just what it was, there's no knowing! Only my idea is, if folks were near me, I should have nothing of that, and should feel nothing except my misfortune."

Lukerya heaved a painful sigh. Her breathing, like her limbs, was not under her control.

"When I come to think, master, of you," she began again, "you are very sorry for me. But you mustn't be too sorry, really! I'll tell you one thing; for instance, I sometimes, even now— Do you remember how merry I used to be in my time? A regular madcap! So do you know what? I sing songs even now."

"Sing? You?"

"Yes: I sing the old songs—songs for choruses, for feasts, Christmas songs, all sorts! I know such a lot of them, you see, and I've not forgotten them. Only dance songs I don't sing. In my state now, it wouldn't suit me."

"How do you sing them?—to yourself?"

"To myself, yes; and aloud too. I can't sing loud, but still one can understand it. I told you a little girl waits on me. A clever little orphan she is. So I have taught her: four songs she has learnt from me already. Don't you believe me? Wait a minute, I'll show you directly."

Lukerya took breath. The thought that this half-dead creature was making ready to begin singing raised an involuntary feeling of dread in me. But before I could utter a word, a long-drawn-out, hardly audible, but pure and true note, was quivering in my ears; it was followed by a second and a third. "In the meadows," sang Lukerya. She sang, the expression of her stony face unchanged, even her eyes riveted on one spot. But how touchingly tinkled out that poor struggling little voice, that wavered like a thread of smoke; how she longed to pour out all her soul in it! I felt no dread now; my heart throbbed with unutterable pity.

"Ah, I can't!" she said suddenly. "I've not the strength: I'm so upset with joy at seeing you."

She closed her eyes.

I laid my hand on her tiny, chill fingers. She glanced at me, and her dark lids, fringed with golden eyelashes, closed again, and were still as an ancient statue's. An instant later they glistened in the half-darkness. They were moistened by a tear.

As before, I did not stir.

"How silly I am!" said Lukerya suddenly, with unexpected force, and opened her eyes wide; she tried to wink the tears out of them. "I ought to be ashamed! What am I doing? It's a long time since I have been like this — not since that day when Vassya Polyakov was here last spring. While he sat with me and talked, I was all right; but when he had gone away, how I did cry in my loneliness! Where did I get the tears from? But there! we girls get our tears for nothing. Master," added Lukerya, "perhaps you have a handkerchief. If you don't mind, wipe my eyes."

I made haste to carry out her desire, and left her the handkerchief. She refused it at first. "What good's such a gift to me?" she said. The handkerchief was plain enough, but clean and white. Afterwards she clutched it in her weak fingers, and did not loosen them again. As I got used to the darkness in which we both were, I could clearly make out her features; could even perceive the delicate flush that peeped out under the coppery hue of her face; could discover in the face, so at least it seemed to me, traces of its former beauty.

"You asked me, master," Lukerya began again, "whether I sleep. I sleep very little, but every time I fall asleep I've dreams — such splendid dreams! I'm never ill in my dreams; I'm always so well, and young. There's one thing's sad: I wake up and long for a good stretch, and I'm all as if I were in chains. I once had such an exquisite dream! Shall I tell it you? Well, listen. I dreamt I was standing in a meadow, and all round me was rye, so tall, and ripe as gold! and I had a reddish dog with me — such a wicked dog; it kept trying to bite me. And I had a sickle in my hands: not a simple sickle; it seemed to be the moon itself—the moon as it is when it's the shape of a sickle. And with this same moon I had to cut the rye clean. Only I was very weary with the heat, and the moon blinded me, and I felt lazy; and corn-flowers were growing all about, and such big ones! And they all turned their heads to me. And I thought in my dream I would pick them: Vassya had promised to come, so I'd pick myself a wreath first; I'd still time to plait it. I began picking corn-flowers; but they kept melting away from between my fingers, do what I would. And I couldn't make myself a wreath. And meanwhile I heard some one coming up to me, so close, and calling, 'Lusha! Lusha!' 'Ah,' I thought, 'what a pity I hadn't time!' No matter, I put that moon on my head instead of corn-flowers. I put it on like a tiara, and I was all brightness directly; I made the whole field light around me. And, behold! over the very top of the ears there came gliding very quickly towards me, not Vassya, but Christ himself! And how I knew it was Christ I can't say: they don't paint him like that—only it was he! No beard, tall, young, all in white, only his belt was golden; and he held out his hand to me. 'Fear not,' said he, 'my bride adorned: follow me; you shall lead the choral dance in the heavenly kingdom, and sing the songs of Paradise.' And how I clung to his hand! My dog at once followed at my heels, but then we began to float upwards! he in front,—his wings spread wide over all the sky, long like a sea-gull's—and I after him! And my dog had to stay behind. Then only I understood that that dog was my illness, and that in the heavenly kingdom there was no place for it."

Lukerya paused a minute.

"And I had another dream, too," she began again; "but maybe it was a vision. I really don't know. It seemed to me I was lying in this very shanty; and my dead parents, father and mother, come to me and bow low to me, but say nothing. And I asked them, 'Why do you bow down to me, father and mother?' 'Because,' they said, 'you suffer much in this world, so that you have not only set free your own soul, but have taken a great burden from off us too. And for us in the other world it is much easier. You have made an end of your own sins; now you are expiating our sins.' And having said this, my parents bowed down to me again, and I could not see them; there was nothing but the walls to be seen. I was in great doubt afterwards what had happened to me. I even told the priest of it in confession. Only he thinks it was not a vision, because visions come only to the clerical gentry."

"And I'll tell you another dream," Lukerya went on. "I dreamt I was sitting on the high-road, under a willow; I had a stick, had a wallet on my shoulders, and my head tied up in a kerchief, just like a pilgrim woman! And I had to go somewhere, a long, long way off, on a pilgrimage. And pilgrims kept coming past me: they came along slowly, all going one way; their faces were weary, and all very much like one another. And I dreamt that moving about among them was a woman, a head taller than the rest, and wearing a peculiar dress, not like ours—not Russian. And her face too was peculiar,—a worn face and severe. And all the others moved away from her; but she suddenly turns, and comes straight to me. She stood still, and looked at me; and her eyes were yellow, large, and clear as a falcon's. And I ask her, 'Who are you?' And she says to me, 'I'm your death.' Instead of being frightened, it was quite the other way: I was as pleased as could be; I crossed myself! And the woman, my death, says to me: 'I'm sorry for you, Lukerya, but I can't take you with me. Farewell!' Good God! how sad I was then! 'Take me,' said I, 'good mother; take me, darling!' And my death turned to me, and began speaking to me. I knew that she was appointing me my hour, but indistinctly, incomprehensibly. 'After St. Peter's day,' said she. With that I awoke. Yes, I have such wonderful dreams!"

Lukerya turned her eyes upwards, and sank into thought.

"Only the sad thing is, sometimes a whole week will go by without my getting to sleep once. Last year a lady came to see me, and she gave me a little bottle of medicine against sleeplessness; she told me to take ten drops at a time. It did me so much good, and I used to sleep; only the bottle was all finished long ago. Do you know what medicine that was, and how to get it?"

The lady had obviously given Lukerya opium. I promised to get her another bottle like it, and could not refrain from again wondering aloud at her patience.

"Ah, master!" she answered, "why do you say so? What do you mean by patience? There, Simeon Stylites now had patience certainly, great patience; for thirty years he stood on a pillar! And another saint had himself buried in the earth, right up to his breast, and the ants ate his face. And I'll tell you what I was told by a good scholar: there was once a country, and the Ishmaelites made war on it, and they tortured and killed all the inhabitants; and do what they would, the people could not get rid of them. And there appeared among these people a holy virgin; she took a great sword, put on armor weighing eighty pounds, went out against the Ishmaelites, and drove them all beyond the sea. Only when she had driven them out, she said to them: 'Now burn me; for that was my vow, that I would die a death by fire for my people.' And the Ishmaelites took her and burnt her, and the people have been free ever since then! That was a noble deed, now! But what am I!»

I wondered to myself whence and in what shape the legend of Joan of Arc had reached her; and after a brief silence, I asked Lukerya how old she was.

«Twenty-eight — or nine. It won't be thirty. But why count the years! I've something else to tell you —»

Lukerya suddenly gave a sort of choked cough, and groaned.

«You are talking a great deal,» I observed to her; «it may be bad for you.»

«It's true,» she whispered, scarce audibly; «it's time to end our talk; but what does it matter! Now, when you leave me, I can be silent as long as I like. Anyway, I've opened my heart.»

I began bidding her good-by. I repeated my promise to send her the medicine, and asked her once more to think well and tell me if there wasn't anything she wanted.

«I want nothing: I am content with all, thank God!» she articulated with very great effort, but with emotion; «God give good health to all! But there, master, you might speak a word to your mamma: the peasants here are poor — if she could take the least bit off their rent! They've not land enough, and no advantages. They would pray to God for you. But I want nothing. I'm quite contented with all.»

I gave Lukerya my word that I would carry out her request, and had already walked to the door. She called me back again.

«Do you remember, master,» she said,— and there was a gleam of something wonderful in her eyes and on her lips,— «what hair I used to have? Do you remember, right down to my knees! It was long before I could make up my mind to it. Such hair as it was! But how could it be kept combed? In my state! So I had it cut off. Yes. Well, good-by, master! I can't talk any more."

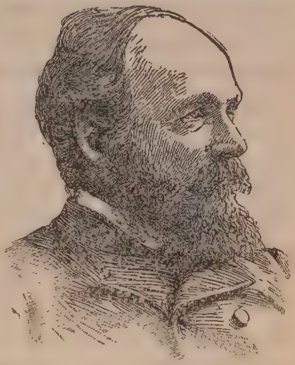
That day, before setting off to shoot, I had a conversation with the village constable about Lukerya. I learnt from him that in the village they called Lukerya the "Living Relic": that she gave them no trouble, however; they never heard complaint or repining from her. "She asks nothing, but on the contrary she's grateful for everything; a gentle soul, one must say, if any there be. Stricken of God," so the constable concluded, "for her sins, one must suppose; but we do not go into that. And as for judging her, no — no, we do not judge her. Let her be!"

A few weeks later I heard that Lukerya was dead. So her death had come for her — and "after St. Peter's day." They told me that on the day of her death she kept hearing the sound of bells, though it was reckoned over five miles from Aleksyevka to the church, and it was a week-day. Lukerya, however, had said that the sounds came not from the church, but from above! Probably she did not dare to say — from heaven.

MOSES COIT TYLER

(1835–1900)

The literary historian who performs for his country a double service to criticism and literature deserves its gratitude. Admirable criticism often lacks the literary touch and tone,—yet these are especially welcome in the critic of literature. Professor Moses Coit Tyler, in the thorough-going and attractive studies he was years in making of the American literary past, stood alone in the dignified endeavor to cover the whole field with scholarly care, and by the methods of broad comprehensive criticism. His task was left incomplete; but he had published exhaustive and stimulating volumes upon the literature of the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, of such a quality as to declare him master of the field. His treatment of material that in some hands would inevitably prove dull in the handling, has made the tentative literary struggles and efforts warm and full of illumination.



Moses Coit Tyler

To this attractiveness may be added the solider characteristics which go to make up the critic truly called to his vocation: judgment, the sense of proportion, an appreciation of what are the underlying principles in the development of American life and letters, and a sound moral insight. Professor Tyler was by birth and training the right sort of man to give a critical survey of the earlier American literature, which is in intent and result so predominantly earnest and ethical.

Moses Coit Tyler was a New-Englander; born in Griswold, Connecticut, on August 2d, 1835. He was graduated from Yale in 1857, and studied theology there and afterwards at Andover Theological Seminary, Andover, Massachusetts. From 1860 to 1862 he was pastor of the First Congregational Church of Poughkeepsie, New York. In 1863 he went to England, and resided there four years. On his return he was appointed to the English chair of the University of Michigan. In 1881 he became Professor of History at Cornell, which position he retained until his death. He was made a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1883.

Professor Tyler's literary activity began with the publication of the ‹Brawnville Papers› in 1869,—a series of essays on physical culture. The initial part of his chief life work was put forth in 1878: ‹A History of American Literature During the Colonial Time,› in two volumes. The preface announced the author's intention of making successive studies, covering the growth of American letters up to the present time. In 1897 ‹A Literary History of the American Revolution› appeared in pursuance of this scheme. Professor Tyler also published in 1879, in conjunction with Professor Henry Morley, a ‹Manual of English Literature.› He contributed to the ‹American Statesmen› Series the monograph on Patrick Henry (1887); and in 1894 appeared ‹Three Men of Letters,›—appreciations of Bishop Berkeley, President Dwight, and Joel Barlow. A volume entitled ‹Essays from the Nation› is made up of contributions to that journal while the writer was in England.

Professor Tyler's criticism of the American literary production is based upon a recognition of its vital relation to history, to politics, and society. He apprehends that the «penmen» have exerted an influence upon the course of American affairs not second to the statesmen and generals. This sense of the significant bearing of the native literature upon native life gives his study a fresh, interesting point of view. Hence it is a contribution to American history. Professor Tyler's style is very enjoyable for liveliness, color, and euphony. His writing has, distinctly, the artistic touch, and it is never dry, formal, or conventional either in manner or thought. The selections appended sufficiently illustrate this trait. Professor Tyler's death occurred at Ithaca, N. Y., December 28th, 1900. He did not live to complete the great task he had set for himself, having published only four volumes of his Literary History of America.

EARLY VERSE-WRITING IN NEW ENGLAND

From ‹A History of American Literature.› Copyright 1878, by G. P. Putnam's Sons

A HAPPY surprise awaits those who come to the study of the early literature of New England with the expectation of finding it altogether arid in sentiment, or void of the spirit and aroma of poetry. The New-Englander of the seventeenth century was indeed a typical Puritan; and it will hardly be said that any typical Puritan of that century was a poetical personage. In proportion to his devotion to the ideas that won for him the derisive honor of his name, was he at war with nearly every form of the beautiful. He himself believed that there was an inappeasable feud between religion and art; and hence the duty of suppressing art was bound up in his soul with the master-purpose of promoting religion. He cultivated the grim and the ugly. He was afraid of the approaches of Satan through the avenues of what is graceful and joyous. The principal business of men and women in this world seemed to him to be not to make it as delightful as possible, but to get through it as safely as possible. By a whimsical and horrid freak of unconscious Manichæism, he thought that whatever is good here is appropriated to God, and whatever is pleasant, to the Devil. It is not strange if he were inclined to measure the holiness of a man's life by its disagreeableness. In the logic and fury of his tremendous faith, he turned away utterly from music, from sculpture and painting, from architecture, from the adornments of costume, from the pleasures and embellishments of society,— because these things seemed only "the Devil's flippery and seduction" to his "ascetic soul, aglow with the gloomy or rapturous mysteries of his theology." Hence, very naturally, he turned away likewise from certain great and splendid types of literature,— from the drama, from the playful and sensuous verse of Chaucer and his innumerable sons, from the secular prose writings of his contemporaries, and from all forms of modern lyric verse except the Calvinistic hymn.

Nevertheless the Puritan did not succeed in eradicating poetry from his nature. Of course, poetry was planted there too deep even for his theological grub-hooks to root it out. Though denied expression in one way, the poetry that was in him forced itself into utterance in another. If his theology drove poetry out of many forms in which it had been used to reside, poetry itself practiced a noble revenge by taking up its abode in his theology. His supreme thought was given to theology; and there he nourished his imagination with the mightiest and sublimest conceptions that a human being can entertain — conceptions of God and man, of angels and devils, of Providence and duty and destiny, of heaven, earth, hell. Though he stamped his foot in horror and scorn upon many exquisite and delicious types of literary art; stripped society of all its embellishments, life of all its amenities, sacred architecture of all its grandeur, the public service of divine worship of the hallowed pomp, the pathos and beauty, of its most reverend and stately forms; though his prayers were often a snuffle, his hymns a dolorous whine, his extemporized liturgy a bleak ritual of ungainly postures and of harsh monotonous howls: yet the idea that filled and thrilled his soul was one in every way sublime, immense, imaginative, poetic,— the idea of the awful omnipotent Jehovah, his inexorable justice, his holiness, the inconceivable brightness of his majesty, the vastness of his unchanging designs along the entire range of his relations with the hierarchies of heaven, the principalities and powers of the pit, and the elect and the reprobate of the sons of Adam. How resplendent and superb was the poetry that lay at the heart of Puritanism, was seen by the sightless eyes of John Milton, whose great epic is indeed the epic of Puritanism.

Turning to Puritanism as it existed in New England, we may perhaps imagine it as solemnly declining the visits of the Muses of poetry, sending out to them the blunt but honest message— «Otherwise engaged.» Nothing could be further from the truth. Of course, Thalia and Melpomene and Terpsichore could not under any pretense have been admitted; but Polyhymnia — why should not she have been allowed to come in? especially if she were willing to forsake her deplorable sisters, give up her pagan habits, and submit to Christian baptism. Indeed, the Muse of New England, whosoever that respectable damsel may have been, was a Muse by no means exclusive: such as she was, she cordially visited every one who would receive her — and every one would receive her. It is an extraordinary fact about these grave and substantial men of New England, especially during our earliest literary age, that they all had a lurking propensity to write what they sincerely believed to be poetry,— and this, in most cases, in unconscious defiance of the edicts of nature and of a predetermining Providence. Lady Mary Montagu said that in England, in her time, verse-making had become as common as taking snuff. In New England, in the age before that, it had become much more common than taking snuff — since there were some who did not take snuff. It is impressive to note, as we inspect our first period, that neither advanced age, nor high office, nor mental unfitness, nor previous condition of respectability, was sufficient to protect any one from the poetic vice. We read of venerable men, like Peter Bulkley, continuing to lapse into it when far beyond the great climacteric. Governor Thomas Dudley was hardly a man to be suspected of such a thing, yet even against him the evidence must be pronounced conclusive: some verses in his own handwriting were found upon his person after his death. Even the sage and serious governor of Plymouth wrote ostensible poems. The renowned pulpit orator, John Cotton, did the same; although in some instances, he prudently concealed the fact by inscribing his English verse in Greek characters upon the blank leaves of his almanac. Here and there, even a town clerk, placing on record the deeply prosaic proceedings of the selectmen, would adorn them in the sacred costume of poetry. Perhaps, indeed, all this was their solitary condescension to human frailty. The earthly element, the passion, the carnal taint, the vanity, the weariness, or whatever else it be that in other men works itself off in a pleasure journey, in a flirtation, in going to the play, or in a convivial bout, did in these venerable men exhaust itself in the sly dissipation of writing verses. Remembering their unfriendly attitude toward art in general, this universal mania of theirs for some forms of the poetic art—this unrestrained proclivity toward the «lust of versification»—must seem to us an odd psychological freak. Or shall we rather say that it was not a freak at all, but a normal effort of nature, which, being unduly repressed in one direction, is accustomed to burst over all barriers in another; and that these grim and godly personages in the old times fell into the intemperance of rhyming, just as in later days, excellent ministers of the gospel and gray-haired deacons, recoiling from the sin and scandal of a game at billiards, have been known to manifest an inordinate joy in the orthodox frivolity of croquet? As respects the poetry which was perpetrated by our ancestors, it must be mentioned that a benignant Providence has its own methods of protecting the human family from intolerable misfortune; and that the most of this poetry has perished. Enough, however, has survived to furnish us with materials for everlasting gratitude, by enabling us in a measure to realize the nature and extent of the calamity which the Divine intervention has spared us.

It will be natural for us to suppose that at any rate, poetry in New England in the seventeenth century could not have been a *Gaya Sciencia*, as poetry was called in Provence in the thirteenth century. Even this, however, is not quite correct; for no inconsiderable part of early New England poetry has a positively facetious intention,—that part, namely, which consists of elegies and epitaphs. Our ancestors seem to have reserved their witticisms principally for tombstones and funerals. When a man died, his surviving friends were wont to conspire together to write verses upon him,—and these verses often sparkled with the most elaborate and painful jests. Thus in 1647, upon the death of the renowned Thomas Hooker of Hartford, his colleague in the pastorate, Samuel Stone, wrote to an eminent minister in Massachusetts certain words of grave and cautious suggestion: «You may think whether it may not be comely for you and myself and some other elders, to make a few verses for Mr. Hooker, and transcribe them in the beginning of his book. I do but propound it.» The appeal was effectual: and when, a few years later, it came Samuel Stone's turn to depart this life, those who outlived him rendered to his memory a similar service; his name furnishing an unusually pleasant opportunity for those ingenuities of allusion, and those literary quirks and puns, that were then thought to be among the graces of a threnody.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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It is proper for us to remember that what we call criticism is not the only valid test of the genuineness and worth of any piece of writing of great practical interest to mankind: there is also the test of actual use and service in the world, in direct contact with the common-sense and the moral sense of large masses of men, under various conditions, and for a long period. Probably no writing which is not essentially sound and true has ever survived this test.

Neither from this test has the great Declaration any need to shrink. Probably no public paper ever more perfectly satisfied the immediate purposes for which it was set forth. From one end of the country to the other, and as fast as it could be spread among the people, it was greeted in public and in private with every demonstration of approval and delight. To a marvelous degree it quickened the friends of the Revolution for their great task. «This Declaration,» wrote one of its signers but a few days after it had been proclaimed, «has had a glorious effect,—has made these colonies all alive.» «With the Independency of the American States,» said another political leader a few weeks later, «a new era in politics has commenced. Every consideration respecting the propriety or impropriety of a separation from

Britain is now entirely out of the question. . . . Our future happiness or misery, therefore, as a people, will depend entirely upon ourselves." Six years afterward, in a review of the whole struggle, a great American scholar expressed his sense of the relation of this document to it, by saying that "into the monumental act of Independence," Jefferson had "poured the soul of the continent."

Moreover, during the century and a quarter since the close of the Revolution, the influence of this State paper on the political character and the political conduct of the American people has been great beyond all calculation. For example, after we had achieved our own national deliverance, and had advanced into that enormous and somewhat corrupting material prosperity which followed the adoption of the Constitution, the development of the cotton interest, and the expansion of the republic into a transcontinental power, we fell, as is now most apparent, under an appalling national temptation,—the temptation to forget, or to repudiate, or to refuse to apply to the case of our human brethren in bondage, the very principles which we ourselves had once proclaimed as the basis of every rightful government, and as the ultimate source of our own claim to an untrammeled nationa life. The prodigious service rendered to us in this awful moral emergency by the Declaration of Independence was, that it public repetition at least once every year in the hearing of vast throngs of the American people, in every portion of the republic kept constantly before our minds, in a form of almost religious sanctity, those few great ideas as to the dignity of human nature, and the sacredness of personality, and the indestructible rights of man as mere man, with which we had so gloriously identified the beginnings of our national existence, and upon which we had proceeded to erect all our political institutions both for the nation and for the States. It did, indeed, at last become very hard for us to listen each year to the preamble of the Declaration of Independence, and still to remain the owners and users and catchers of slaves; still harder, to accept the doctrine that the righteousness and prosperity of slavery was to be taken as the dominant policy of the nation. The logic of Calhoun was as flawless as usual, when he concluded that the chief obstruction in the way of his system was the preamble of the Declaration of Independence. Had it not been for the inviolable sacredness given by it to those sweeping aphorisms about the natural rights of man, it may be doubted whether, under the vast practical inducements involved, Calhoun might not have succeeded in winning over an immense majority of the American people to the support of his compact and plausible scheme for making slavery the basis of the republic. It was the preamble of the Declaration of Independence which elected Lincoln, which sent forth the Emancipation Proclamation, which gave victory to Grant, which ratified the Thirteenth Amendment.

Moreover, we cannot doubt that the permanent effects of the great Declaration on the political and even the ethical ideals of the American people are wider and deeper than can be measured by our experience in grappling with any single political problem; for they touch all the spiritual springs of American national character, and they create, for us and for all human beings, a new standard of political justice and a new principle in the science of government.

«Much ridicule, a little of it not altogether undeserved,» says a brilliant English scholar of our time, who is also nobly distinguished in the sphere of English statesmanship, «has been thrown upon the opening clause of the Declaration of Independence, which asserts the inherent natural right of man to enjoy life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety. Yet there is an implied corollary in this, which enjoins the highest morality that in our present state we are able to think of as possible. If happiness is the right of our neighbor, then not to hinder him but to help him in its pursuit must plainly be our duty. If all men have a claim, then each man is under an obligation. The corollary thus involved is the corner-stone of morality. It was an act of good augury thus to inscribe happiness, as entering at once into the right of all and into the duty of all, in the very head and front of the new charter, as the base of a national existence and the first principle of a national government. The omen has not been falsified. The Americans have been true to their first doctrine. They have never swerved aside to set up caste and privilege, to lay down the doctrine that one man's happiness ought to be an object of greater solicitude to society than any other man's, or that one order should be encouraged to seek its prosperity through the depression of any other order. Their example proved infectious. The assertion in the New World that men have a right to happiness, and an obligation to promote the happiness of one another, struck a spark in the Old World. Political construction in America immediately preceded the last violent stage of demolition in Europe.»

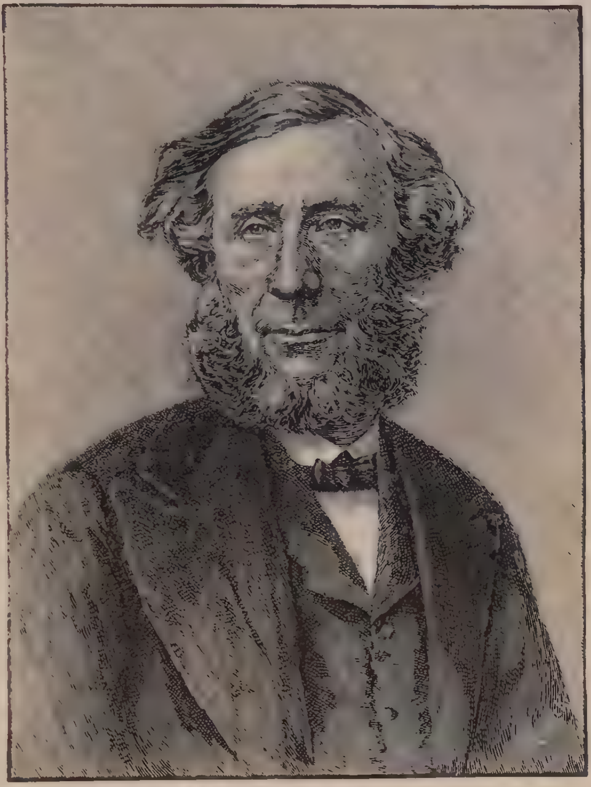
We shall not here attempt to delineate the influence of this State paper upon mankind in general. Of course the emergence of the American Republic as an imposing world-power is a phenomenon which has now for many years attracted the attention of the human race. Surely no slight effect must have resulted from the fact that among all civilized peoples, the one American document best known is the Declaration of Independence; and that thus the spectacle of so vast and beneficent a political success has been everywhere associated with the assertion of the natural rights of man. "The doctrines it contained," says Buckle, "were not merely welcomed by a majority of the French nation, but even the government itself was unable to withstand the general feeling." "Its effect in hastening the approach of the French Revolution . . . was indeed most remarkable." Elsewhere also in many lands, among many peoples, it has been appealed to again and again as an inspiration for political courage, as a model for political conduct; and if, as the brilliant English historian just cited has affirmed, "that noble Declaration . . . ought to be hung up in the nursery of every king, and blazoned on the porch of every royal palace," it is because it has become the classic statement of political truths which must at last abolish kings altogether, or else teach them to identify their existence with the dignity and happiness of human nature.

It would be unfitting, in a work like the present, to treat of the Declaration of Independence without making more than an incidental reference to its purely literary character.

Very likely most writings — even most writings of genuine and high quality — have had the misfortune of being read too little. There is, however, a misfortune — perhaps a greater misfortune — which has overtaken some literary compositions, and these not necessarily the noblest and the best: the misfortune of being read too much. At any rate, the writer of a piece of literature which has been neglected, need not be refused the consolation he may get from reflecting that he is at least not the writer of a piece of literature which has become hackneyed. Just this is the sort of calamity which seems to have befallen the Declaration of Independence. Is it, indeed, possible for us Americans, near the close of the nineteenth century, to be entirely just to the literary quality of this most monumental document — this much belauded, much bespouted, much beflouted document? — since in order to be so, we need to rid ourselves if we can of the obstreperous memories of a lifetime of Independence Days, and to unlink and disperse the associations which have somehow confounded Jefferson's masterpiece with the rattle of firecrackers, with the flash and the splutter of burning tar-barrels, and with that unreserved, that gyratory and perspiratory eloquence, now for more than a hundred years consecrated to the return of our fateful Fourth of July.

Had the Declaration of Independence been what many a revolutionary State paper is,—a clumsy, verbose, and vaporing production,—not even the robust literary taste and the all-forgiving patriotism of the American people could have endured the weariness, the nausea, of hearing its repetition in ten thousand different places, at least once every year for so long a period. Nothing which has not supreme literary merit has ever triumphantly endured such an ordeal, or ever been subjected to it. No man can adequately explain the persistent fascination which this State paper has had, and which it still has, for the American people, or its undiminished power over them, without taking into account its extraordinary literary merits: its possession of the witchery of true substance wedded to perfect form; its massiveness and incisiveness of thought; its art in the marshaling of the topics with which it deals; its symmetry, its energy, the definiteness and limpidity of its statements; its exquisite diction,—at once terse, musical, and electrical; and as an essential part of this literary outfit, many of those spiritual notes which can attract and enthrall our hearts,—veneration for God, veneration for man, veneration for principle, respect for public opinion, moral earnestness, moral courage, optimism, a stately and noble pathos,—finally, self-sacrificing devotion to a cause so great as to be herein identified with the happiness, not of one people only, or of one race only, but of human nature itself.

Upon the whole, this is the most commanding and the most pathetic utterance, in any age, in any language, of national grievances and of national purposes; having a Demosthenic momentum of thought, and a fervor of emotional appeal such as Tyrtæus might have put into his war-songs. Indeed, the Declaration of Independence is a kind of war-song: it is a stately and a passionate chant of human freedom; it is a prose lyric of civil and military heroism. We may be altogether sure that no genuine development of literary taste among the American people in any period of our future history can result in serious misfortune to this particular specimen of American literature.



JOHN TYNDALL.

JOHN TYNDALL

(1820-1893)

John Tyndall was one of the many Irishmen who have contributed substantially to English thought. He was born at Leighlin Bridge, near Carlow, Ireland, on August 21st, 1820. His early education was got at home, and at the school in his native town; his grounding in English and mathematics being especially sound. In 1839 he became civil assistant to a division of the ordnance survey, and from 1844 to 1847 was a railway engineer at Manchester. He then became a teacher of physics at Queenwood College, Hampshire; and in 1848, desirous of further scientific study and culture, he went to Germany and heard the Marburg lectures of Bunsen and Knoblauch, working in the laboratory and making original investigations in magnetism. He secured his doctorate in 1857; and after more study in Berlin returned to England, where the publication of his scientific discoveries brought him a fellowship in the Royal Society. In 1853 he was, on the proposal of Faraday, elected to the chair of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution, with which he remained connected for more than thirty years, becoming its superintendent in 1867 and not retiring until 1887.

Professor Tyndall's long career, from its inception as a teacher and investigator, was one of fruitful discovery in the realm of physics and of brilliant exposition of scientific tenets. He began as a young man the study of radiant heat; and the problems of electricity, magnetism, and acoustics also engaged his attention, valuable books upon these subjects resulting. Such volumes as ‘Heat Considered as a Mode of Motion’ (1863), ‘On Radiation’ (1865), and ‘Dust and Disease,’ are among the more familiar. The scientific phenomena of glaciers interested him for many years, and from 1856 to his death he visited the Alps every season,—the initial journey was in company with Huxley,—and made studies, the deductions from which were embodied in a series of books very enjoyable in point of literary value. ‘Mountaineering in 1861’ (1862), and ‘Hours of Exercise in the Alps’ (1871), are typical of this class. The publications of Tyndall also include a large number of more technical treatises, adding substantially to his reputation as a physicist, and to the advancement of modern science in the field of his election. In 1872 he made a successful lecture tour in the United States; and devoted the proceeds to the establishment of scholarships for the benefit of students doing original research in sciences. Degrees were conferred upon him by the universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, and Oxford, the latter in spite of a protest that he taught materialism.

Tyndall was a man of marked force of character, unswerving in his loyalty to truth as he saw it, and gifted in the synthetic presentation of principles with lucidity, vigor, and eloquence. His literary quality is of the high order also to be found in the English Huxley or the German Haeckel. His Belfast Address in 1874, as president of the British Association,—which made a sensation as a bold, clear, uncompromising statement of the position of the present-day scientists,—is a masterly survey and summary of scientific progress, and very noble in its spirit and expression. The fine closing portion is one extract chosen to show Tyndall as a writer. A careful reading of the whole address is sufficient to relieve the speaker from the charge of being a materialist in any strict sense, for he distinctly disclaims that creed; confessing the mystery of the source of all life to be insoluble for the man of science, and giving full credit to the intuitional and creative faculties as authoritative within their province. The fairness of mind and breadth of vision, together with the literary merit, displayed in this address, make it one of the most remarkable deliverances upon science by a scholar of the time.

Professor Tyndall died at Haslemere, Surrey, England, on December 4th, 1893, from an overdose of chloral accidentally administered by his wife.

THE MATTERHORN

From ‹Hours of Exercise in the Alps›

On the Thursday evening a violent thunder-storm had burst over Breuil, discharging new snow upon the heights, but also clearing the oppressive air. Though the heavens seemed clear in the early part of Friday, clouds showed a disposition to meet us from the south as we returned from the col. I inquired of my companion whether, in the event of the day being fine, he would be ready to start on Sunday. His answer was a prompt negative. In Val Tournanche, he said, they always «sanctified the Sunday.» I mentioned Bennen, my pious Catholic guide, whom I permitted and encouraged to attend his mass on all possible occasions, but who nevertheless always yielded without a murmur to the demands of the weather. The reasoning had its effect. On Saturday Maquignaz saw his confessor, and arranged with him to have a mass at two A. M. on Sunday; after which, unshaded by the sense of duties unperformed, he would commence the ascent.

The claims of religion being thus met, the point of next importance, that of money, was set at rest by my immediate acceptance of the tariff published by the Chanoine Carrel. The problem being thus reduced to one of muscular physics, we pondered the question of provisions, decided on a bill of fare, and committed its execution to the industrious mistress of the hotel.

A fog, impenetrable to vision, had filled the whole of the Val Tournanche on Saturday night, and the mountains were half concealed and half revealed by this fog when we rose on Sunday morning. The east at sunrise was lowering, and the light which streamed through the cloud orifices was drawn in ominous red bars across the necks of the mountains. It was one of those uncomfortable Laodicean days which engender indecision, —threatening, but not sufficiently so to warrant postponement. Two guides and two porters were considered necessary for the first day's climb. A volunteer, moreover, attached himself to our party, who carried a sheepskin as part of the furniture of the cabin. To lighten their labor, the porters took a mule with them as far as the quadruped could climb, and afterwards divided the load among themselves. While they did so I observed the weather. The sun had risen with considerable power, and had broken the cloud-plane to pieces. The severed clouds gathered into masses more or less spherical, and were rolled grandly over the ridges into Switzerland. Save for a swathe of fog which now and then wrapped its flanks, the Matterhorn itself remained clear; and strong hopes were raised that the progress of the weather was in the right direction.

We halted at the base of the Tête du Lion, a bold precipice formed by the sudden cutting down of the ridge which flanks the Val Tournanche to the right. From its base to the Matterhorn stretches the Col du Lion; crossed for the first time in 1860, by Mr. Hawkins, myself, and our two guides. We were now beside a snow gully, which was cut by a deep furrow along its centre, and otherwise scarred by the descent of stones. Here each man arranged his bundle and himself, so as to cross the gully in the minimum of time. The passage was safely made, a few flying shingle only coming down upon us. But danger declared itself where it was not expected. Joseph Maquignaz led the way up the rocks. I was next, Pierre Maquignaz next, and last of all the porters. Suddenly a yell issued from the leader: «Cachez-vous!» I crouched instinctively against the rock, which formed a by no means perfect shelter, when a bowlder buzzed past me through the air, smote the rocks below me, and with a savage hum flew down to the lower glacier. Thus warned, we swerved to an *arête;* and when stones fell afterwards, they plunged to the right or left of us.

In 1860 the great couloir which stretches from the Col du Lion downwards was filled with a *névé* of deep snow. But the atmospheric conditions which have caused the glaciers of Switzerland to shrink so remarkably during the last ten years have swept away this *névé*. We had descended it in 1860 hip-deep in snow, and I was now reminded of its steepness by the inclination of its bed. Maquignaz was incredulous when I pointed out to him the line of descent to which we had been committed, in order to avoid the falling stones of the Tête du Lion. Bennen's warnings on the occasion were very emphatic, and I could understand their wisdom now better than I did then.

When Mr. Hawkins and myself first tried the Matterhorn, a temporary danger, sufficient to quell for a time the enthusiasm even of our lion-hearted guide, was added to the permanent ones. Fresh snow had fallen two days before; it had quite oversprinkled the Matterhorn, converting the brown of its crags into an iron-gray; this snow had been melted and re-frozen, forming upon the rocks an enameling of ice. Besides their physical front, moreover, in 1860, the rocks presented a psychological one, derived from the rumor of their savage inaccessibility. The crags, the ice, and the character of the mountain, all conspired to stir the feelings. Much of the wild mystery has now vanished; especially at those points which in 1860 were places of virgin difficulty, but down which ropes now hang to assist the climber. The intrinsic grandeur of the Matterhorn, however, cannot be effaced.

After some hours of steady climbing, we halted upon a platform beside the tattered remnant of one of the tents employed by me in 1862. Here we sunned ourselves for an hour. We subsequently worked upward, scaling the crags and rounding the bases of those wild and wonderful rock-towers, into which the weather of ages has hewn the southern ridge of the Matterhorn. The work required knowledge, but with a fair amount of skill it is safe work. I can fancy nothing more fascinating to a man given by nature and habit to such things than a climb alone among these crags and precipices. He need not be *theological;* but if complete, the grandeur of the place would certainly fill him with religious awe.

Looked at from Breuil, the Matterhorn presents two summits: the one, the summit proper, a square rock-tower in appearance; the other, which is really the end of a sharp ridge abutting against the rock-tower, an apparently conical peak. On this peak Bennen and myself planted our flagstaff in 1862. At some distance below it the mountain is crossed by an almost horizontal ledge, always loaded with snow, which from its resemblance to a white necktie has been called the Cravate. On this ledge a cabin was put together in 1867. It stands above the precipice where I quitted my rope in 1862. Up this precipice, by the aid of a thicker — I will not say a stronger — rope, we now scrambled; and following the exact route pursued by Bennen and myself five years previously, we came to the end of the Cravate. At some places the snow upon the ledge fell steeply from its junction with the cliff; deep step-cutting was also needed where the substance had been melted and re-congealed. The passage, however, was soon accomplished along the Cravate to the cabin, which was almost filled with snow.

Our first need was water. We could of course always melt the snow; but this would involve a wasteful expenditure of heat. The cliff at the base of which the hut was built, overhung; and from its edge the liquefied snow fell in showers beyond the cabin. Four ice-axes were fixed on the ledge, and over them was spread the residue of a second tent which I had left at Breuil in 1862. The water falling upon the canvas flowed towards its centre. Here an orifice was made, through which the liquid descended into vessels placed to receive it. Some modification of this plan might probably be employed with profit for the storing-up of water for droughty years in England.

I lay for some hours in the warm sunshine, in presence of the Italian mountains, watching the mutations of the air. But when the sun sank, the air became chill, and we all retired to the cabin. We had no fire, though warmth was much needed. A lover of the mountains, and of his kind, had contributed an India-rubber mattress; on which I lay down, a light blanket being thrown over me, while the guides and porters were rolled up in sheepskins. The mattress was a poor defense against the cold of the subjacent rock. I bore this for two hours, unwilling to disturb the guides; but at length it became intolerable. On learning my condition, however, the good fellows were soon alert; and folding a sheepskin around me, restored me gradually to a pleasant temperature. I fell asleep, and found the guides preparing breakfast and the morning well advanced when I opened my eyes.

It was past six o'clock when the two brothers and I quitted the cabin. The porters deemed their work accomplished, but they halted for a time to ascertain whether we were likely to be driven back or to push forward. We skirted the Cravate, and reached the bridge at its western extremity. This we ascended along the old route of Bennen and myself to the conical peak already referred to, which, as seen from Breuil, constitutes a kind of second summit of the Matterhorn. From this point to the base of the final precipice of the mountain stretches an *arête*, terribly hacked by the weather, but on the whole horizontal. When I first made the acquaintance of this savage ridge — called by Italians the Spalla — it was almost clear of snow. It was now loaded, the snow being beveled to an edge of exceeding sharpness. The slope to the left, falling towards Zmutt, was exceedingly steep, while the precipices on the right were abysmal. No other part of the Matterhorn do I remember with greater interest than this. It was terrible, but its difficulties were fairly within the grasp of human skill; and this association is more ennobling than where the circumstances are such as to make you conscious of your own helplessness. On one of the sharpest teeth of the ridge Joseph Maquignaz halted, and turning to me with a smile, remarked, "There is no room for giddiness here, sir." In fact, such possibilities in such places must be altogether excluded from the chapter of accidents of the climber.

It was at the end of this ridge, where it abuts against the last precipice of the Matterhorn, that my second flagstaff was left in 1862. I think there must have been something in the light falling upon this precipice, that gave it an aspect of greater verticality when I first saw it than it seemed to possess on the present occasion. We had however been struggling for many hours previously, and may have been dazed by our exertion. I cannot otherwise account for three of my party declining flatly to make any attempt upon the precipice. It looks very bad, but no real climber with his strength unimpaired would pronounce it, without trial, insuperable. Fears of this rock-wall, however, had been excited long before we reached it. It was probably the addition of the psychological element to the physical — the reluctance to encounter new dangers on a mountain which had hitherto inspired a superstitious fear — that quelled further exertion.

Seven hundred feet, if the barometric measurement can be trusted, of very difficult rock-work now lay above us. In 1862 this height had been underestimated by both Bennen and myself. Of the 14,800 feet of the Matterhorn, we then thought we had accomplished 14,600. If the barometer speaks truly, we had only cleared 14,200.

Descending the end of the ridge, we crossed a narrow cleft and grappled with the rocks at the other side of it. Our ascent was oblique, bearing to the right. The obliquity at one place fell to horizontality, and we had to work on the level round a difficult protuberance of rock. We cleared the difficulty without haste, and then rose straight against the precipice. Above us a rope hung down the cliff, left there by Maquignaz on the occasion of his first ascent. We reached the end of this rope, and some time was lost by my guide in assuring himself that it was not too much frayed by friction. Care in testing it was doubly necessary; for the rocks, bad in themselves, were here crusted with ice. The rope was in some places a mere hempen core surrounded by a casing of ice, over which the hands slid helplessly. Even with the aid of the rope in this condition it required an effort to get to the top of the precipice, and we willingly halted there to take a minute's breath. The ascent was virtually accomplished, and a few minutes more of rapid climbing placed us on the lightning-smitten top. Thus ended the long contest between me and the Matterhorn.

The day thus far had swung through alternations of fog and sunshine. While we were on the ridge below, the air at times was blank and chill with mist; then with rapid solution the cloud would vanish, and open up the abysses right and left of us. On our attaining the summit a fog from Italy rolled over us, and for some minutes we were clasped by a cold and clammy atmosphere. But this passed rapidly away, leaving above us a blue heaven, and far below us the sunny meadows of Zermatt. The mountains were almost wholly unclouded, and such clouds as lingered amongst them only added to their magnificence.

The Dent d'Érin, the Dent Blanche, the Gabelhorn, the Mischabel, the range of heights between it and Monte Rosa, the Lyskamm, and the Breithorn, were all at hand, and clear; while the Weisshorn, noblest and most beautiful of all, shook out a banner towards the north, formed by the humid southern air as it grazed the crest of the mountain.

The world of peaks and glaciers surrounding this immediate circlet of giants was also open to us up to the horizon. Our glance over it was brief; for it was eleven o'clock, and the work before us soon claimed all our attention. I found the débris of my former expedition everywhere: below, the fragments of my tents, and on the top a piece of my ladder fixed in the snow as a flagstaff. The summit of the Matterhorn is a sharp horizontal *arête*, and along this we now moved eastward. On our left was the roof-like slope of snow seen from the Riffel and Zermatt; on our right were the savage precipices which fall into Italy. Looking to the further end of the ridge, the snow there seemed to be trodden down; and I drew my companions' attention to the apparent footmarks. As we approached the place, it became evident that human feet had been there two or three days previously. I think it was Mr. Elliot of Brighton who had made this ascent,—the first accomplished from Zermatt since 1865. On the eastern end of the ridge we halted to take a little food; not that I seemed to need it,—it was the remonstrance of reason rather than the consciousness of physical want that caused me to do so.

We took our ounce of nutriment and gulp of wine (my only sustenance during the entire day), and stood for a moment silently and earnestly looking down towards Zermatt. There was a certain official formality in the manner in which the guides turned to me and asked, « Êtes-vous content d'essayer ? » ["Are you willing to try ?"] A sharp responsive « Oui ! » set us immediately in motion. It was nearly half past eleven when we quitted the summit. The descent of the roof-like slope already referred to offered no difficulty; but the gradient very soon became more formidable.

One of the two faces of the Matterhorn pyramid, seen from Zermatt, falls towards the Zmutt glacier, and has a well-known snow plateau at its base. The other face falls towards the Furgge glacier. We were on the former. For some time, however, we kept close to the *arête* formed by the intersection of the two faces of the pyramid; because nodules of rock jutted from it which offered a kind of footing. These rock protuberances helped us in another way: round them an extra rope which we carried was frequently doubled, and we let ourselves down by the rope as far as it could reach, liberating it afterwards (sometimes with difficulty) by a succession of jerks. In the choice and use of these protuberances the guides showed both judgment and skill. The rocks became gradually larger and more precipitous, a good deal of time being consumed in dropping down and doubling round them. Still we preferred them to the snow slope at our left as long as they continued practicable.

This they at length ceased to be, and we had to commit ourselves to the slope. It was in the worst possible condition. When snow first falls at these great heights it is usually dry, and has no coherence. It resembles to some extent flour, or sand, or sawdust. Shone upon by a strong sun, it partly melts, shrinks, and becomes more consolidated; and when subsequently frozen it may be safely trusted. Even though the melting of the snow and its subsequent freezing may only be very partial, the cementing of the granules adds immensely to the safety of the footing. Hence the advantage of descending such a slope before the sun has had time to unlock the rigidity of the night's frost. But we were on the steepest Matterhorn slope during the two hottest hours of the day, and the sun had done his work effectually. The layer of snow was about fifteen inches thick. In treading it we came immediately upon the rock, which in most cases was too smooth to furnish either prop or purchase. It was on this slope that the Matterhorn catastrophe occurred; it is on this slope that other catastrophes will occur, if this mountain should ever become fashionable.

Joseph Maquignaz was the leader of our little party; and a brave, cool, and competent leader he proved himself to be. He was silent, save when he answered his brother's anxious and oft-repeated question, « Es-tu bien placé, Joseph ? » Along with being perfectly cool and brave, he seemed to be perfectly truthful. He did not pretend to be « bien placé » when he was not, nor avow a power of holding which he knew he did not possess. Pierre Maquignaz is, I believe, under ordinary circumstances, an excellent guide, and he enjoys the reputation of being never tired. But in such circumstances as we encountered on the Matterhorn he is not the equal of his brother. Joseph, if I may use the term, is a man of high boiling point, his constitutional *sangfroid* resisting the ebullition of fear. Pierre, on the contrary, shows a strong tendency to boil over in perilous places.

Our progress was exceedingly slow, but it was steady and continued. At every step our leader trod the snow cautiously, seeking some rugosity on the rock beneath it. This however was rarely found, and in most cases he had to establish a mechanical attachment between the snow and the slope which bore it. No semblance of a slip occurred in the case of any one of us; and had it occurred, I do not think the worst consequences could have been avoided. I wish to stamp this slope of the Matterhorn with the character that really belonged to it when I descended it; and I do not hesitate to say that the giving way of any one of our party would have carried the whole of us to ruin. Why, then, it may be asked, employ the rope? The rope, I reply, notwithstanding all its possible drawbacks under such circumstances, is the safeguard of the climber. Not to speak of the moral effect of its presence, an amount of help upon a dangerous slope that might be measured by the gravity of a few pounds is often of incalculable importance; and thus, though the rope may be not only useless but disastrous if the footing be clearly lost, and the glissade fairly begun, it lessens immensely the chance of this occurrence.

With steady perseverance, difficulties upon a mountain, as elsewhere, come to an end. We were finally able to pass from the face of the pyramid to its rugged edge, where it was a great relief to feel that honest strength and fair skill, which might have gone for little on the slope, were masters of the situation.

Standing on the *arête*, at the foot of a remarkable cliff gable seen from Zermatt, and permitting the vision to range over the Matterhorn, its appearance is exceedingly wild and impressive. Hardly two things can be more different than the two aspects of the mountain from above and below. Seen from the Riffel, or Zermatt, it presents itself as a compact pyramid, smooth and steep, and defiant of the weathering air. From above, it seems torn to pieces by the frosts of ages; while its vast facettes are so foreshortened as to stretch out into the distance like plains. But this underestimate of the steepness of the mountain is checked by the deportment of its stones. Their discharge along the side of the pyramid to-day was incessant; and at any moment, by detaching a single bowlder, we could let loose a cataract of them, which flew with wild rapidity and with a thunderous clatter down the mountain. We once wandered too far from the *arête*, and were warned back to it by a train of these missiles sweeping past us.

As long as our planet yields less heat to space than she receives from the bodies of space, so long will the forms upon her surface undergo mutation; and as soon as equilibrium in regard to heat has been established, we shall have, as Thomson has pointed out, not peace but death. Life is the product and accompaniment of change; and the selfsame power that tears the flanks of the hills to pieces is the mainspring of the animal and vegetable worlds. Still there is something chilling in the contemplation of the irresistible and remorseless character of those infinitesimal forces, whose integration through the ages pulls down even the Matterhorn. Hacked and hurt by time, the aspect of the mountain from its higher crags saddened me. Hitherto the impression that it made was that of savage strength; but here we had inexorable decay.

This notion of decay, however, implied a reference to a period when the Matterhorn was in the full strength of mountainhood. My thoughts naturally ran back to its possible growth and origin. Nor did they halt there; but wandered on through molten worlds to that nebulous haze which philosophers have regarded, and with good reason, as the proximate source of all material things. I tried to look at this universal cloud, containing within itself the prediction of all that has since occurred; I tried to imagine it as the seat of those forces whose action was to issue in solar and stellar systems, and all that they involve. Did that formless fog contain potentially the *sadness* with which I regarded the Matterhorn? Did the *thought* which now ran back to it simply return to its primeval home? If so, had we not better recast our definitions of matter and force? for if life and thought be the very flower of both, any definition which omits life and thought must be inadequate if not untrue.

Questions like these, useless as they seem, may still have a practical outcome. For if the final goal of man has not been yet attained, if his development has not been yet arrested, who can say that such yearnings and questionings are not necessary to the opening of a finer vision, to the budding and the growth of diviner powers? Without this upward force could man have risen to his present height? When I look at the heavens and the earth, at my own body, at my strength and weakness of mind. even at these ponderings, and ask myself, Is there no being or thing in the universe that knows more about these matters than I do?—what is my answer? Supposing our theologic schemes of creation, condemnation, and redemption to be dissipated; and the warmth of denial which they excite, and which, as a motive force, can match the warmth of affirmation, dissipated at the same time: would the undeflected human mind return to the meridian of absolute neutrality as regards these ultra-physical questions? Is such a position one of stable equilibrium?

Such are the questions, without replies, which could run through consciousness during a ten-minutes' halt upon the weathered spire of the Matterhorn.

We shook the rope away from us, and went rapidly down the rocks. The day was well advanced when we reached the cabin, and between it and the base of the pyramid we missed our way. It was late when we regained it, and by the time we reached the ridge of the Hörnli we were unable to distinguish rock from ice. We should have fared better than we did if we had kept along the ridge and felt our way to the Schwarz See, whence there would have been no difficulty in reaching Zermatt; but we left the Hörnli to our right, and found ourselves incessantly checked in the darkness by ledges and precipices, possible and actual. We were afterwards entangled in the woods of Zmutt, carving our way wearily through bush and bramble, and creeping at times along dry and precipitous stream-beds. But we finally struck the path and followed it to Zermatt, which we reached between one and two o'clock in the morning.

THE CLAIMS OF SCIENCE

From the ‹Belfast Address›

TRACE the line of life backwards, and see it approaching more and more to what we call the purely physical condition. We come at length to those organisms which I have compared to drops of oil suspended in a mixture of alcohol and water. We reach the *protogenes* of Haeckel, in which we have "a type distinguishable from a fragment of albumen only by its finely granular character." Can we pause here? We break a magnet and find two poles in each of its fragments. We continue the process of breaking; but however small the parts, each carries with it, though enfeebled, the polarity of the whole. And when we can break no longer, we prolong the intellectual vision to the polar molecules. Are we not urged to do *something* similar in the case of life? Is there not a temptation to close to some extent with Lucretius, when he affirms that « Nature is seen to do all things spontaneously of herself, without the meddling of the gods »? or with Bruno, when he declares that Matter is not « that mere empty capacity which philosophers have pictured her to be, but the universal mother, who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb »? Believing as I do in the continuity of nature, I cannot stop abruptly where our microscopes cease to be of use. Here the vision of the mind authoritatively supplements the vision of the eye. By an intellectual necessity I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that Matter — which we, in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium — the promise and potency of all terrestrial life.

If you ask me whether there exists the least evidence to prove that any form of life can be developed out of matter, without demonstrable antecedent life, my reply is that evidence considered perfectly conclusive by many has been adduced; and that, were some of us who have pondered this question to follow a very common example, and accept testimony because it falls in with our belief, we also should eagerly close with the evidence referred to. But there is in the true man of science a wish stronger than the wish to have his beliefs upheld,— namely, the wish to have them true; and this stronger wish causes him to reject the most plausible support if he has reason to suspect that it is vitiated by error. Those to whom I refer as having studied this question, believing the evidence offered in favor of « spontaneous generation » to be thus vitiated, cannot accept it. They know full well that the chemist now prepares from inorganic matter a vast array of substances which were some time ago regarded as the sole products of vitality. They are intimately acquainted with the structural power of matter as evidenced in the phenomena of crystallization. They can justify scientifically their *belief* in its potency, under the proper conditions, to produce organisms. But in reply to your question, they will frankly admit their inability to point to any satisfactory experimental proof that life can be developed save from demonstrable antecedent life. As already indicated, they draw the line from the highest organisms through lower ones down to the lowest; and it is the prolongation of this line by the intellect beyond the range of the senses that leads them to the conclusion which Bruno so boldly enunciated.

The "materialism" here professed may be vastly different from what you suppose, and I therefore crave your gracious patience to the end. "The question of an external world," says Mr. J. S. Mill, "is the great battle-ground of metaphysics." Mr. Mill himself reduces external phenomena to "possibilities of sensation." Kant, as we have seen, made time and space "forms" of our own intuitions. Fichte, having first by the inexorable logic of his understanding proved himself to be a mere link in that chain of eternal causation which holds so rigidly in nature, violently broke the chain by making nature, and all that it inherits, an apparition of his own mind. And it is by no means easy to combat such notions. For when I say I see you, and that I have not the least doubt about it, the reply is, that what I am really conscious of is an affection of my own retina. And if I urge that I can check my sight of you by touching you, the retort would be that I am equally transgressing the limits of fact; for what I am really conscious of is, not that you are there, but that the nerves of my hand have undergone a change. All we hear, and see, and touch, and taste, and smell, are, it would be urged, mere variations of our own condition, beyond which, even to the extent of a hair's-breadth, we cannot go. That anything answering to our impressions exists outside of ourselves is not a *fact*, but an *inference*, to which all validity would be denied by an idealist like Berkeley, or by a skeptic like Hume. Mr. Spencer takes another line. With him, as with the uneducated man, there is no doubt or question as to the existence of an external world. But he differs from the uneducated, who think that the world really *is* what consciousness represents it to be. Our states of consciousness are mere *symbols* of an outside entity, which produces them and determines the order of their succession, but the real nature of which we can never know. In fact, the whole process of evolution is the manifestation of a Power absolutely inscrutable to the intellect of man. As little in our day as in the days of Job can man by searching find this Power out. Considered fundamentally, then, it is by the operation of an insoluble mystery that life on earth is evolved, species differentiated, and mind unfolded, from their prepotent elements in the unmeasurable past. There is, you will observe, no very rank materialism here.

The strength of the doctrine of evolution consists, not in an experimental demonstration (for the subject is hardly accessible to this mode of proof), but in its general harmony with scientific thought.

From contrast, moreover, it derives enormous relative strength. On the one side, we have a theory (if it could with any propriety be so called) derived, as were the theories referred to at the beginning of this address, not from the study of nature, but from the observation of men — a theory which converts the Power whose garment is seen in the visible universe into an artificer, fashioned after the human model, and acting by broken efforts as a man is seen to act. On the other side, we have the conception that all we see around us, and all we feel within us,— the phenomena of physical nature as well as those of the human mind,— have their unsearchable roots in a cosmical life (if I dare apply the term), an infinitesimal span of which is offered to the investigation of man. And even this span is only knowable in part. We can trace the development of a nervous system, and correlate with it the parallel phenomena of sensation and thought. We see with undoubting certainty that they go hand in hand. But we try to soar in a vacuum the moment we seek to comprehend the connection between them. An Archimedean fulcrum is here required which the human mind cannot command; and the effort to solve the problem, to borrow a comparison from an illustrious friend of mine, is like the effort of a man trying to lift himself by his own waistband. All that has been here said is to be taken in connection with this fundamental truth. When « nascent senses » are spoken of, when « the differentiation of a tissue at first vaguely sensitive all over » is spoken of, and when these processes are associated with « the modification of an organism by its environment," the same parallelism, without contact or even approach to contact, is implied. Man the *object* is separated by an impassable gulf from man the *subject*. There is no motor energy in intellect to carry it without logical rupture from the one to the other.

Further, the doctrine of evolution derives man in his totality from the interaction of organism and environment through countless ages past. The human understanding, for example,—that faculty which Mr. Spencer has turned so skillfully round upon its own antecedents,—is itself a result of the play between organism and environment through cosmic ranges of time. Never surely did prescription plead so irresistible a claim. But then it comes to pass that, over and above his understanding, there are many other things appertaining to man whose prescriptive rights are quite as strong as those of the understanding itself. It is a result, for example, of the play of organism and environment, that sugar is sweet and that aloes are bitter, that the smell of henbane differs from the perfume of a rose. Such facts of consciousness (for which, by the way, no adequate reason has yet been rendered) are quite as old as the understanding; and many other things can boast an equally ancient origin. Mr. Spencer at one place refers to that most powerful of passions, the amatory passion, as one which when it first occurs is antecedent to all relative experience whatever; and we may pass its claim as being at least as ancient and valid as that of the understanding. Then there are such things woven into the texture of man as the feelings of awe, reverence, wonder; and not alone the sexual love just referred to, but the love of the beautiful, physical, and moral, in nature, poetry, and art. There is also that deep-set feeling, which since the earliest dawn of history, and probably for ages prior to all history, incorporated itself in the religions of the world. You who have escaped from these religions into the high-and-dry light of the intellect may deride them; but in so doing you deride accidents of form merely, and fail to touch the immovable basis of the religious sentiment in the nature of man. To yield this sentiment reasonable satisfaction is the problem of problems at the present hour. And grotesque in relation to scientific culture as many of the religions of the world have been and are,—dangerous, nay destructive, to the dearest privileges of freemen as some of them undoubtedly have been, and would, if they could, be again,—it will be wise to recognize them as the forms of a force, mischievous if permitted to intrude on the region of *knowledge*, over which it holds no command, but capable of being guided to noble issues in the region of *emotion*, which is its proper and elevated sphere.

All religious theories, schemes, and systems, which embrace notions of cosmogony, or which otherwise reach into the domain of science, must, *in so far as they do this*, submit to the control of science, and relinquish all thought of controlling it. Acting otherwise proved disastrous in the past, and it is simply fatuous to-day. Every system which would escape the fate of an organism too rigid to adjust itself to its environment, must be plastic to the extent that the growth of knowledge demands. When this truth has been thoroughly taken in, rigidity will be relaxed, exclusiveness diminished, things now deemed essential will be dropped, and elements now rejected will be assimilated. The lifting of the life is the essential point; and as long as dogmatism, fanaticism, and intolerance are kept out, various modes of leverage may be employed to raise life to a higher level. Science itself not unfrequently derives a motive power from an ultra-scientific source. Whewell speaks of enthusiasm of temper as a hindrance to science; but he means the enthusiasm of weak heads. There is a strong and resolute enthusiasm in which science finds an ally; and it is to the lowering of this fire, rather than to the diminution of intellectual insight, that the lessening productiveness of men of science in their mature years is to be ascribed. Mr. Buckle sought to detach intellectual achievement from moral force. He gravely erred; for without moral force to whip it into action, the achievements of the intellect would be poor indeed.

It has been said that science divorces itself from literature; but the statement, like so many others, arises from lack of knowledge. A glance at the least technical writings of its leaders — of its Helmholtz, its Huxley, and its Du Bois-Reymond — would show what breadth of literary culture they command. Where among modern writers can you find their superiors in clearness and vigor of literary style? Science desires not isolation, but freely combines with every effort towards the bettering of man's estate. Single-handed, and supported not by outward sympathy but by inward force, it has built at least one great wing of the many-mansioned home which man in his totality demands. And if rough walls and protruding rafter-ends indicate that on one side the edifice is still incomplete, it is only by wise combination of the parts required, with those already irrevocably built, that we can hope for completeness. There is no necessary incongruity between what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. The moral glow of Socrates, which we all feel by ignition, has in it nothing incompatible with the physics of Anaxagoras which he so much scorned, but which he would hardly scorn to-day.

And here I am reminded of one amongst us, hoary but still strong, whose prophet-voice some thirty years ago, far more than any other of his age, unlocked whatever of life and nobleness lay latent in its most gifted minds; one fit to stand beside Socrates or the Maccabean Eleazar, and to dare and suffer all that they suffered and dared,—fit, as he once said of Fichte, «to have been the teacher of the Stoa, and to have discoursed of beauty and virtue in the grove of Academe.» With a capacity to grasp physical principles which his friend Goethe did not possess, and which even total lack of exercise has not been able to reduce to atrophy, it is the world's loss that he, in the vigor of his years, did not open his mind and sympathies to science, and make its conclusions a portion of his message to mankind. Marvelously endowed as he was, equally equipped on the side of the heart and of the understanding, he might have done much towards teaching us how to reconcile the claims of both, and to enable them in coming times to dwell together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace.

And now the end is come. With more time or greater strength and knowledge, what has been here said might have been better said, while worthy matters here omitted might have received fit expression. But there would have been no material deviation from the views set forth. As regards myself, they are not the growth of a day; and as regards you, I thought you ought to know the environment which, with or without your consent, is rapidly surrounding you, and in relation to which some adjustment on your part may be necessary. A hint of Hamlet's, however, teaches us all how the troubles of common life may be ended; and it is perfectly possible for you and me to purchase intellectual peace at the price of intellectual death. The world is not without refuges of this description; nor is it wanting in persons who seek their shelter, and try to persuade others to do the same. The unstable and the weak will yield to this persuasion, and they to whom repose is sweeter than the truth. But I would exhort you to refuse the offered shelter, and to scorn the base repose; to accept, if the choice be forced upon you, commotion before stagnation, the leap of the torrent before the stillness of the swamp.

In the course of this address I have touched on debatable questions, and led you over what will be deemed dangerous ground; and this partly with the view of telling you that as regards these questions, science claims unrestricted right of search. It is not to the point to say that the views of Lucretius and Bruno, of Darwin and Spencer, may be wrong. Here I should agree with you, deeming it indeed certain that these views will undergo modification. But the point is, that whether right or wrong, we ask the freedom to discuss them. For science, however, no exclusive claim is here made; you are not urged to erect it into an idol. The inexorable advance of man's understanding in the path of knowledge, and those unquenchable claims of his moral and emotional nature which the understanding can never satisfy, are here equally set forth. The world embraces not only a Newton, but a Shakespeare; not only a Boyle, but a Raphael; not only a Kant, but a Beethoven; not only a Darwin, but a Carlyle. Not in each of these, but in all, is human nature whole. They are not opposed, but supplementary; not mutually exclusive, but reconcilable. And if, unsatisfied with them all, the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will turn to the Mystery from which it emerged, seeking so to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith;—so long as this is done not only without intolerance or bigotry of any kind, but with the enlightened recognition that ultimate fixity of conception is here unattainable, and that each succeeding age must be held free to fashion the Mystery in accordance with its own needs,—then, casting aside all the restrictions of materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with the *knowing* faculties, may be called the *creative* faculties of man.

«Fill thy heart with it,» said Goethe, «and then name it as thou wilt.» Goethe himself did this in untranslatable language. Wordsworth did it in words known to all Englishmen, and which may be regarded as a forecast and religious vitalization of the latest and deepest scientific truth:—

«For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,—
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. *And I have felt*
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
And rolls through all things."

TYRTÆUS, ARCHILOCHUS,

AND THEIR SUCCESSORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEK LYRIC

(700-450 B. C.)

BY H. RUSHTON FAIRCLOUGH

> «Their songs divine
> Who mixed for Grecian mouths heaven's lyric wine.»
>
> —SWINBURNE, ‹On the Cliffs.›

It is hardly necessary, I imagine, to insist upon the intrinsic and permanent value of Greek poetry. As a body of literature, Greek poetry is the richest legacy that the modern world has received from ancient times. The epic poems of Greece, the Iliad and Odyssey, whether we regard them as the work of one mind or the still more wonderful result of a school of bards, are in their freshness, strength, and artistic beauty without a rival in the early literature of nations. Greek tragedy under the masters, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, comprises works of consummate genius, which take rank with the highest tragic art of all times. Greek comedy, at least that of Aristophanes, is unique in the history of literature; and in later times the pastoral Muse of Theocritus sings with a delicacy and sweetness that have never been surpassed.

In the sphere of lyric poetry Greece was no less great; but of the ancient lyric writers the modern world is for certain reasons comparatively ignorant.

The Iliad and Odyssey have come down to us in their entirety. In the case of the dramatists, though only a tithe of what they wrote has survived, still so prolific were these masters, that that tithe is very considerable. But the lyric writers have met misfortune at the hands of time. In the case of many, their works are completely lost; and as for the rest, mere scraps and fragments of their songs are all that we can pick up. The only lyric poet of whom we can know much, because much of him is preserved, is Pindar; and Pindar's grand triumphal odes, written as they were to celebrate the glories of victors in a chariot or foot race, a boxing or wrestling match, are so elaborate and difficult of construction, and so alien in spirit to modern literary taste, that it is no easy matter to appreciate his grandeur.

It may be asked why the great bulk of Greek lyric verse has disappeared. The main answer is to be found in the essential character of that poetry. It was *song*-poetry; *i. e.*, poetry composed for singing, the soul of which vanished when the music passed away. After the loss of Greek independence, Greek music rapidly degenerated. The music composed by the poets of the classical period was too severe and noble for the Greeks of later days. The older songs, therefore, were no longer sung; and the poetry, minus its music, giving way to shallow and sensational compositions, passed into oblivion.

Scanty however as are the fragments of Greek lyric poetry, these scanty fragments are of priceless value. The little we possess makes every lover of literature pray that among the rediscovered treasures of antiquity, to which every year of late has made valuable contributions, many more of these lost lyrics may come to light.

In one sense or another, singing was characteristic of nearly all forms of Greek poetry. The earliest conditions of epic recitation may be realized from certain scenes in the Odyssey. In one passage (viii. 62 ff.) the shipwrecked Odysseus is a guest in the palace of King Alcinous. The feast is spread, and the great hall is thronged with Phæacians, when in the midst appears the blind Demodocus, led by the King's herald, who sets the minstrel on a high chair inlaid with silver, hangs up his lyre, and brings him a basket of bread and a goblet of wine. After the feast the minstrel is stirred by the Muse to sing the deeds of famous men, and his theme is a quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, "whereof the fame had reached the wide heaven." At another feast (i. 325 ff.) the suitors of Penelope compel Phemius the minstrel to take his lyre and sing to them. His lay deals with the return of the Achæans from Troy; and as he sings, Penelope in an upper room, with tears in her eyes, listens to the strain.

Thus epic poetry, at least in the earliest times, was sung to the lyre; but this singing was probably unlike the later recitations by the rhapsodists, for the verse of Homer is unsuited for melodies, and Greek writers uniformly distinguish epic from lyric,— the former being narrative poetry, the latter song poetry.

Even elegiac poetry was not regarded by the Greeks as lyric; and yet elegiac verse was originally sung to the music of the flute, an instrument used both on mournful occasions and also at festive social gatherings. But as melodies were found to be inappropriate with the hexameter of epic verse, so their use was not long continued with the elegiac couplet, which in its metrical form is so closely allied to the hexameter.

Still less lyric in character was the iambic verse of satire, which was first perfected by Archilochus of Paros. Iambic metre, the metre of English blank verse, is (as Aristotle long ago perceived) of all verse forms the least removed from prose. And yet the iambics of Archilochus, according to Plutarch, were sometimes sung. More frequently this verse was given in recitative with musical accompaniment.

Both elegiac and iambic poetry, then, though originally lyrical, at an early time lost their distinctly lyrical character; and even if their recitation at a funeral or in camp or round the banqueting-board was accompanied by music, yet they were no more regarded by the Greeks as lyrical than were the poems of Homer. For the sake of convenience, however, and because of their subject-matter, these forms are usually included under the head of lyric poetry by historians of Greek literature.

During the epic period in Greece, lyric poetry existed mainly in an embryonic, undeveloped state. Epic poetry held undisputed sway till near the end of the eighth century before our era. Then began a movement in the direction of political freedom. Oligarchies and democracies took the place of ancient monarchies; the planting of colonies and the extension of commerce gave an impetus to the spirit of enterprise and individual development; and the citizen began to assume his proper rôle as a factor in the life of the State.

It was coincident with this change that lyric poetry—the poetry that voiced, not the ancestral glory of kings and princes, but the feelings and experience of the individual—entered upon its course of artistic development. The Ionians of Asia Minor were perhaps the first Greeks among whom democratic institutions came to life. They were certainly the most active in commercial and colonizing enterprises by land and sea, as well as the first to enter the hitherto unexplored field of speculative philosophy.

To the student of Greek history, lyric poetry is very significant. Without it we should hardly realize the great extent of the Greek world toward east and west. Greece would mean little more than Athens and Sparta. But lyric poetry widens our vision. Here we learn of the wealth and luxury of the Asiatic Ionians, of the noble chivalry and refinement of life in the Æolian isles of the Ægean sea, of the beauty and grace of festal celebrations in the Dorian Peloponnesus, in southern Italy and distant Sicily. Then comes Pindar, the heroes of whose triumphal odes are Greeks hailing from all corners of the known world,—from the coasts of the Black Sea, or the colonies of far-off Libya and remote Gaul.

In Ionic Greece the new poetry took two forms,—elegiac and iambic. The structure of elegiac verse shows its close connection with the epic; for it is written in couplets, of which the first line is the ordinary hexameter as employed by Homer, and the second the same line abbreviated to five feet. The name *elegy*, however, indicates the presence of a foreign element; for it comes from that of a plaintive instrumental dirge, in vogue among certain tribes of Asia Minor, especially the Phrygians, to which people belonged Olympus, a musical reformer of the eighth century. As adopted by the Greeks, elegy was not confined to mournful themes, but its application varied as much as that of the flute, the Asiatic instrument which at first accompanied it.

The earliest Greek elegists of whom we have any records are Callinus and Tyrtæus, who lived as contemporaries at the beginning of the seventh century B. C. Callinus, it is true, is a rather shadowy personage; but he was regarded by the Greeks as the inventor of elegy, and is known to have lived at Ephesus in Ionia, at a time when Asia Minor was overrun by hordes of Cimmerians, who came down from the northern shores of the Black Sea.

Tyrtæus, according to tradition, was born in Attica; but his poetic career centres in Sparta. Here, during and after the second Messenian war, there was much civic discord; and both Tyrtæus the poet and Terpander the musician are said to have been publicly invited by the Lacedæmonians to apply the resources of art in inspiring a lofty patriotism, and thus healing the wounds of the body politic. The lame Attic schoolmaster — for tradition thus describes Tyrtæus — was eminently successful in his noble task; and the Spartans not only conferred upon the poet the rare favor of citizenship, but did him the greater honor of preserving his poems from age to age, and revering them as national songs. These were sung by the soldiers round the camp-fires at night; and the officers rewarded the best singer with extra rations. Tyrtæus also composed choruses for groups of old men, young men, and boys, the general character of which may be inferred from the following popular ditty, which was sung to a dance accompaniment:—

(*a*) In days of yore, most sturdy youths were we.
(*b*) That *we* are now: come, watch us, if you will.
(*c*) But *we'll* be stronger far than all of you.*

Famous too were the marching-songs of Tyrtæus, which were accompanied by flute music, and sung by the soldiers advancing to battle. These were written in the tripping anapæstic measure, and in the Dorian dialect. One example may be paraphrased thus:—

On, ye glory of Sparta's youth!
  Ye whose sires are the city's might:

---

*Unless otherwise credited, translations are by the essayist.

Grasp the shield with the left hand thus,
Boldly poise the spear in the right;
Of your lives' worth take ye no heed,—
Sparta knows not a coward's deed.

It is for his elegies, however, that Tyrtæus is most favorably known. True to their origin, these poems, though addressed to a Dorian audience, are written in the Ionic dialect. We have fragments of one elegy called 'Good Government,' which eulogizes the Spartan constitution and King Theopompus, one of the heroes of the first Messenian war. But most of the elegies of Tyrtæus are less distinctly political, and aim simply at infusing into the citizen soldiery a spirit of valor, military honor, and contempt for cowardice. The following is a rendering of one of these martial elegies, by the poet Thomas Campbell. The picture of the youth whose fair form lies outstretched in death, is not only pathetic and beautiful but also peculiarly Greek:—

How GLORIOUS fall the valiant, sword in hand,
In front of battle for their native land!
But oh! what ills await the wretch that yields,
A recreant outcast from his country's fields!
The mother whom he loves shall quit her home,
An aged father at his side shall roam;
His little ones shall weeping with him go,
And a young wife participate his woe;
While, scorned and scowled upon by every face,
They pine for food, and beg from place to place.

Stain of his breed! dishonoring manhood's form,
All ills shall cleave to him; affliction's storm
Shall blind him wandering in the vale of years,
Till, lost to all but ignominious fears,
He shall not blush to leave a recreant's name,
And children, like himself, inured to shame.

But we will combat for our fathers' land,
And we will drain the life-blood where we stand,
To save our children: fight ye side by side,
And serried close, ye men of youthful pride,
Disdaining fear, and deeming light the cost
Of life itself in glorious battle lost.

Leave not our sires to stem the unequal fight,
Whose limbs are nerved no more with buoyant might;
Nor, lagging backward, let the younger breast
Permit the man of age (a sight unblest)

To welter in the combat's foremost thrust,
His hoary head disheveled in the dust,
And venerable bosom bleeding bare.

But youth's fair form, though fallen, is ever fair,
And beautiful in death the boy appears,—
The hero boy, that dies in blooming years:
In man's regret he lives, and woman's tears;
More sacred than in life, and lovelier far,
For having perished in the front of war.

In striking contrast with Tyrtæus and Callinus, whose elegies are so full of martial spirit, stands Mimnermus, an Ionian poet of Smyrna, who flourished near the end of the seventh century B. C. This century witnessed the gradual subjection of the Asiatic Greeks to the Lydian yoke; and from Mimnermus we gather that his Ionian fellow-countrymen, who in former days had successfully resisted the barbarian might, were now sunk in inglorious inactivity and fettered in complacent slavery. Yet the poet can rejoice in the brave days of old, when «on the Hermian plain the spearman mowed down the dense ranks of Lydian cavalry, and Pallas Athene ne'er found fault with *his* keen valor, as on he rushed in the vanguard, escaping the piercing arrows of his foes in the clash of bloody battle.» The poet's forefathers too once «left lofty Pylus, home of Neleus, and came in ships to lovely Asia, and in fair Colophon settled with the might of arms, being leaders of fierce boldness; and thence they passed by the counsel of the gods and captured Æolian Smyrna.»

But the prevailing tone of Mimnermus's verse is that of luxurious indolence and sensual enjoyment. This is the main characteristic of those elegies, which are addressed to a favorite flute-player called Nanno.

Where's life or joy, when Love no more shines fair?

The beauty of comely youth fires the poet with the heat of intense passion:—

Then down my body moisture runs in streams,
As gazing on the bloom of joyous youth,
I tremble oft; so bright are beauty's beams.

But his heart is flooded with melancholy; for all this joy and beauty remind Mimnermus that crabbed age, «unhappy and graceless,» is coming on apace,

And cherished youth is short-lived as a dream.

As Homer had said long before, «we are but as the leaves which appear with the flowers of spring»; and «when springtime is past, then is it better to die than live»: for «at our side stand two black Fates, one of gloomy age and the other of death»; and of the two, old age and death, the soft, effeminate, pleasure-loving Mimnermus hesitates not to choose the latter:—

Ah! fair and lovely bloom the flowers of youth—
  On men and maids they beautifully smile;
But soon comes doleful eld, who, void of ruth,
  Indifferently afflicts the fair and vile:
Then cares wear out the heart; old eyes forlorn
  Scarce reck the very sunshine to behold,
Unloved by youths, of every maid the scorn,—
  So hard a lot God lays upon the old.

Translation of John Addington Symonds.

If disease and care trouble not, Mimnermus would make sixty years the extreme limit of life to be desired; but his younger contemporary, the Athenian Solon, who had little sympathy with such gloomy views, appeals to the «sweet singer» to change his *three* to *four* score years.

Mimnermus, a pure hedonist, lived only for the sensual pleasures that life could afford; and when these were withdrawn, life was to him no longer worth living. The poet had no sublime religious faith, no lofty philosophy, to guide and comfort his soul; and at a time when Greece was still in her youth, and almost before she had entered upon her wonderful career of glorious achievement, this bright intellect sinks into a nerveless ennui, and gives way to a world-weary pessimism.

Mimnermus lived before his time; and it is therefore a less remarkable fact that when elegiac verse was long afterwards cultivated by learned poets and versifiers in the artificial society of Alexandria and Augustan Rome, the sweet sentimental Mimnermus should have been more often taken as a model than were the saner and more robust writers of early Greek elegy.

From elegiac we pass to iambic verse; which, like elegy, has an Ionic origin, is written in the Ionic dialect, and lies midway between epic and lyric poetry proper. But there is this important difference between iambic and elegiac verse: the latter is in form but slightly removed from the dignified measure of heroic poetry; the former—the metre of English blank verse—is but one remove from the language of every-day life. It is therefore suitable for poetry of a personal tone and conversational style; and thus it became the common form for miscellaneous subjects of no great elevation in thought, as well as for sharp satire and dramatic dialogue.

There is a story that connects the name *iambic* with the festivals of Demeter. When that goddess was bewailing the loss of her daughter Persephone, none could relieve her grief until the maid Iambe, with her sparkling witticisms, raised a smile on the sorrowful mother's lips. Archilochus, the reputed inventor of iambic poetry, was a competitor with his verses at the feasts of Demeter; and it is doubtless in the freedom of satiric and jocular utterance tolerated on such occasions, that we are to seek the origin of this species of verse.

Both iambic and elegiac verse were often cultivated by the same poets. Certain fragments of the elegies of Archilochus, as well as of Solon, have come down to us. In one elegy Archilochus lamented, in graceful language, the loss of a friend at sea. In another we find the martial tone of Callinus. «I serve the Lord of war,» says the soldier-poet, «and am skilled in the Muses' pleasing gifts. With my spear I earn my kneaded bread, with my spear my Thracian wine, and when I drink 'tis on my spear I rest.»

Archilochus was born in the island of Paros, one of the Cyclades, and flourished at the beginning of the seventh century B. C. His father Telesicles was a man of aristocratic rank, but his mother Enipo was a slave. While a mere youth he accompanied his father, when the latter led to Thasos, in the northern Ægean, a colony of gold-seekers from Paros. To the young man, disappointed in his quest, Paros with her «figs and sailor life» seemed infinitely superior to Thasos which «like a donkey's back, stands crowned with wild wood. 'Tis a place by no means fair or lovely or pleasant, as is the land by Siris's streams.» This allusion to the Siris would seem to imply that the poet had previously traveled to southern Italy. Archilochus soon found the condition of Thasos to be desperate:—

All the woes of Hellas throng the Thasian isle,

over which «the stone of Tantalus was suspended.» The colonists attempted to gain a foothold on the mainland opposite, but the Thracian tribes drove them back; and in one conflict Archilochus, though he managed to save his life, had to part with his shield. «I'll get another just as fine,» he adds with cheerful composure. This roving soldier-poet afterwards engaged in war in Eubœa, and visited Sparta; but the paternal government of that model State would have none of him, and he was promptly ordered to withdraw. Subsequently he returned to his native place, and was eventually killed in a battle between the Parians and the people of the neighboring island of Naxos.

The poet's private life was not of a high type, and seems to have been deeply colored by his ill-success in love. He was betrothed to

Neobule, daughter of Lycambes, a Parian, and was passionately enamored of the girl.

> But oh! to touch the hand of her I love!

he sighs; and then gives us this simple and beautiful picture:—

> Holding a myrtle rod she blithely moved,
> And a fair blossoming rose; the flowing hair
> Shadowed her shoulders, falling to her girdle.
>
> Translation of J. A. Symonds.

In the depth of personal feeling, and the impetuosity and fire of his passion for Neobule, Archilochus belongs to the same class as the Lesbian singers, Alcæus and Sappho. «So strong,» he writes, «was the storm of love which gathered in my heart, that over my eyes it poured a heavy mist, and from my brain stole my wits away.»

For what reason we can only conjecture, Lycambes withdrew his consent to the marriage of his daughter; whereupon the poet, in furious rage, assailed him with merciless abuse, embracing in his venomous attack — for chivalry was a virtue unrecognized by Archilochus — both Neobule herself and her innocent sisters. To illustrate the power of this master of satire, tradition assures us that Lycambes and his daughters were driven to self-destruction. Good reason, then, had Archilochus to utter in blunt fashion the unchristian boast:—

> One mighty art full well I know—
> To punish sore my mischief-working foe.

We possess but scanty fragments of the poems of Archilochus, and therefore are unable to form for ourselves a correct judgment upon his merits. There is, however, plenty of evidence to show in what esteem he was held by antiquity. Though Homer stood supreme above all other poets, yet Archilochus, *summo proximus*, was placed in the same rank. In statuary they were represented together; and Quintilian assures us that if Archilochus was inferior to any other poet, the inferiority, in the opinion of many, was due to his subject-matter, not his genius. When Plato made his first assaults upon the Sophists, Gorgias exclaimed, «Athens has found a new Archilochus.»

The Roman Horace claimed to be not merely the Alcæus but also the Archilochus of Rome. «I was the first,» he says, «to show to Latium Parian iambics; following the metre and spirit of Archilochus, but not his subjects or words.» Archilochus in his rhythms, as in other ways, gives proof of a daring originality. One interesting use to which he put his epodes, or system of lines alternately long and short, was in the narration of fables which contained a satiric moral. In one fragment a fox thus prays: «O Zeus, father Zeus! thine is power in heaven; thou seest the deeds of men, both knavish and righteous, and in beasts too thou payest heed to frowardness and justice.» Burns could sing how—

«The best-laid plans o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley»;

but surely no poet-moralist was ever bolder than Archilochus, in thus attributing moral qualities to the lower creatures. In these fables he was the forerunner of Æsop.

Still another metrical creation of this poet's must be mentioned. This is the trochaic system, which like the iambic was destined to become one of the most popular measures in later poetry. Here too in Archilochus we find evidence of much variety; but the favorite trochaic line of the Parian poet was that of four measures. Tennyson's ‹Locksley Hall› is in its form a distant descendant of the tetrameters of Archilochus. This measure was used by him for personal description which is humorous rather than malicious in intent. So for example in the passage: «I care not for a tall general with outspread legs,—a curled, well-shaven dandy: give me a short man with bandy legs, who treads firmly on his feet and is full of spirit.» The tetrameter is further employed in giving counsel or in animated philosophic moralizing:—

To the gods intrust thou all things. Ofttimes out of evil toil
Raise they mortals who lie abject, stretched upon earth's darksome soil.
Ofttimes too they overturn men; and when we have walked in pride,
Trip us up and throw us prostrate. Then all evils throng our side,
And we fare forth lacking substance, outcast and of wits bereft.

The poet's beautiful lines on equanimity are well worth remembering:—

TOSSED on a sea of troubles, Soul, my Soul,
Thyself do thou control;
And to the weapons of advancing foes
A stubborn breast oppose:
Undaunted 'mid the hostile might
Of squadrons burning for the fight.

Thine be no boasting when the victor's crown
Wins thee deserved renown;
Thine no dejected sorrow, when defeat
Would urge a base retreat:
Rejoice in joyous things—nor overmuch
Let grief thy bosom touch
'Midst evil, and still bear in mind
How changeful are the ways of human-kind.

Translation of William Hay.

Still another side of the manifold literary activity of Archilochus is represented by his hymns composed in honor of gods or heroes. In one of his trochaic couplets we find the first allusion in Greek literature to the *dithyramb*, or convivial hymn, in praise of Dionysus, the seed from which grew the glorious tragedy of Athens. «When my brain,» says the poet, in words which imply a chorus of revelers, «is smitten by wine as by a thunderbolt, I know how to lead off the dithyramb, the beautiful strain of Lord Dionysus.» Thus Archilochus was the predecessor of Pindar in the dithyramb of Bacchic festivities, as he was also in the songs of victory sung at Olympia. Even in Pindar's day exultant friends still sang the «Hail Victor» refrain of Archilochus's hymn to Heracles, as they led the conquering hero to the shrine of Zeus.

It is not, however, as an elegiac or love poet, as an inventor of varied forms of verse, as a fable-writer or singer of hymns and songs of victory, that Archilochus is best remembered: it is as the forerunner of the great Aristophanes, of Lucilius, Horace, and Juvenal, of Swift and Pope, of Molière and Voltaire, and as the most potent wielder in antiquity of the shafts of personal satire by means of what Hadrian called his «frenzied iambi»; for, as Quintilian says, compressed into his «short and quivering sentences was the maximum of blood and sinew.» In this sphere his surpassing greatness has completely overshadowed later iambic writers of no little intrinsic merit; such as Simonides of Amorgus, the unsparing reviler of womankind, and the caustic Hipponax of Ephesus, whose crippled lines (for Hipponax was the inventor of the so-called «limping iambics») present vivid and homely pictures of daily life among the Asiatic Greeks of those remote times.

The iambic measure, having been found a fitting vehicle for personal and satiric effusions, afterwards enjoyed the great distinction of being adopted as the ordinary verse of dialogue in the Attic drama. Greek elegy, too, being applicable to the most heterogeneous subjects, especially to epigrammatic composition, continued an independent existence not only till the glory of Greece herself had departed, but even till after the fall of the Roman empire.

In contrast with this Ionic poetry, let us turn to that which was first brought to perfection by the Æolian and Dorian tribes, and which alone was regarded by the Greeks as lyric. If we cared to employ a term used by the Greeks themselves, we might distinguish Æolian and Dorian lyric by the term *melic*, because such poetry was always set to some *melos* or melody. The Æolian lyric was cultivated chiefly in the Æolian island of Lesbos, the Dorian in the Dorian Peloponnesus and Sicily. The former was sung in the Æolic dialect, the latter chiefly in the traditional epic dialect, but included a sparing admixture of Doric forms. The two schools differ materially in every respect,—in style, subject, and form.

The Æolic was intended to be sung by a single voice, the singer accompanying himself on a stringed instrument, with suitable gestures. It was essentially personal, expressing the singer's own emotion. Political feeling is, to be sure, prominent in Alcæus; but this is due to the poet's identifying his personality so completely with a political party. As to form, Æolic lyrics are very simple, either consisting of a series of short lines of equal length, or of stanzas in which a shorter line marks the separation from one another. The four-lined stanza is the commonest form. The Alcaic and Sapphic odes of Horace are illustrations familiar to the Latin student.

On the other hand, Dorian lyric poetry was sung by a number in chorus, accompanied by dancing and musical instruments. For the most part it was of public importance, and when it was performed in private the occasion was one of general interest. Hence choral poetry is found connected with the sacred and festal gatherings of the people, or the marriages and funerals of private life. The structure of a choral poem is often very elaborate and artificial; but the movements of the dance, appealing to the eye, assisted the ear in unweaving the intricacies of the rhythm.

Let it always be borne in mind that Greek dancing was very different from the modern art. Dancing to our mind simply implies tripping it «on the light fantastic toe»; and often with little reason and less grace. But in Greece the term dancing applied to all movements of the body which were intended to aid in the interpretation of poetry or the expression of emotion. Thus gestures, postures, and attitudes were most important forms of dancing, and in dance movements the hands and arms played a much larger part than the feet. Aristotle tells us that dancers imitate actions, characters, and passions by means of gestures and rhythmical motion. Thus the spirit which animates Greek mythology and Greek art—the desire to give form and body to mental conceptions—is characteristic of Greek dancing. Various attempts have been made in recent years to reproduce the graceful and rhythmical movements of ancient dancing. One of the most successful of these was that of the young women of Vassar College, who in May 1893 rendered Sophocles's ‹Antigone› in the original Greek, adhering as closely as possible to the ancient mode of representation. The lyrics, sung to Mendelssohn's fine music, were accompanied by expressive and artistic dance evolutions. The beautiful imitative and interpretative movements of the choristers were in striking contrast with the ludicrous and meaningless feats of the spinning ballet-girls, with their scant muslin skirts and painted expressionless faces.

As to Greek music, it too was very different from ours; but in this sphere the advantage certainly lies with the modern art. And yet the music of the Greeks, as illustrated by the few extant remains, especially by the Apollo hymns found at Delphi in 1893, has its own peculiar beauties, which can arouse the sympathy and interest of a cultivated audience even to-day.

In the best period of Greek poetry, the only musical instruments employed were practically the lyre, a string instrument, and the flute, a wind instrument; the former being much preferred because it allowed the same person to sing and play. Other string instruments, such as the cithara, phorminx, psaltery, chelys, barbiton, and pectis, were all mere variations of the lyre, and depended on the same principle. Instruments with a large number of strings were known, as the magadis and trigon; but these, though commonly used by professional musicians, were unhesitatingly condemned by Plato and Aristotle, as pandering to perverted tastes. As to wind instruments, the flute was originally imported from Lydia, and was still unfamiliar to the Greeks in Homer's time. This flute must not be confounded with the one used in our modern orchestras, for it resembled rather the clarionet or oboe. It was also stronger and shriller than our modern flute. Flutes varied in length; and a double flute was often used. The syrinx, or Pan's pipe, had seven reeds of different length, giving the seven notes of the scale. For special effect the trumpet or horn was introduced: also the tympanum or drum, and cymbals.

The question is often asked whether the Greeks employed harmony or not. Part-singing was unknown among them, as were also the elaborate harmonies of the modern art. Yet they did understand and employ harmonies; though with the exception of octave singing, these were confined to instrumental music. In the best days of Greek song, however, harmony seems to have been little more than a matter of octaves, fourths, and fifths,—the only concords, it is said, that the Japanese have to-day. Pythagoras on theory rejected the third, which we regard as the most pleasing of intervals; but it was apparently used in practice.

Yet if the Greeks were far inferior to us in harmony, it would appear that they developed melody to an extraordinary degree. Quarter-tones, used it is true as merely passing notes, were sung by the voice and played on strings; and as there was no bowing, as with our violin, this was done without sliding from one note to another. Yet this sort of playing, when well done, aroused the greatest enthusiasm.

In Greek lyric, the three sister arts of poetry, music, and dance formed a trinity in unity, whereas with us they are quite distinct. Poetry and music may be united artificially on occasion; but in antiquity the great poets were musicians as well, and wrote their own music, perhaps simultaneously with their poetry. As for the dance, that too was an important element of Greek lyric; though nowadays it is very poor poetry indeed that we should care to marry to the art of romping.

After what has just been said, it will not be thought remarkable that the first name in the history of Greek melic, or lyric poetry proper, is noteworthy also in the history of music. Terpander, who was the first to add three strings to the primitive four-stringed lyre, and who thus gave a great impetus to musical development, was born in the Æolian island of Lesbos. He is said to have won the victor's prize on the occasion when the festival of Apollo Carneus was first established at Sparta in 676 B. C. His consequent fame gave him great influence with the music-loving Lacedæmonians, among whom he introduced his melodies or *nomes*, which received the sanction of State authority. These nomes, which were sacred hymns sung by a single voice, were composed chiefly in the stately dactylic and solemn spondaic verses. Only long syllables are used in a hymn to Zeus which begins in this simple but weighty language: «Zeus, of all things the beginning, of all things leader: Zeus, to thee I offer this beginning of hymns.»

That the Æolian Terpander should have practiced his art in a Dorian State is but one illustration of the way in which the various streams of Greek artistic activity tended to intermingle. In the seventh century, however, Sparta was the greatest power in Greece; and it was but natural that she should act as a magnet, drawing within her borders the leading artists of every State. Thus Terpander the Lesbian was followed by Tyrtæus a reputed Athenian, Clonas the Theban, Thaletas the Cretan, and Alcman the Lydian. These were the poets who laid the foundations of choral poetry, which was destined to have so magnificent a future.

Meanwhile in Terpander's native isle, the wealthy and luxurious Lesbos, that form of song which embodied purely personal sentiment was being gradually developed. We know nothing of the immediate predecessors of the great Lesbian poets; but the fact that Terpander was entering upon his career at the beginning of the seventh century is sufficient proof that at that time Lesbos was already a centre of music and poetry. At the end of this same century, suddenly and without warning, we come face to face in Lesbos with the very perfection of lyric art.

The greatest names in Æolian lyric are Alcæus and Sappho. The former was a Lesbian noble, a proud and fiery cavalier, who sang of love and wine or poured forth passionate thoughts on politics and philosophy. The scanty fragments of Sappho's songs fully bear out the verdict of antiquity, that her verse was unrivaled in grace and sweetness. She was «the poetess,» as Homer was «the poet»; and

Plato added her to «the choir of Muses nine.» (See the special articles on these two poets.) With the Æolian poets of Lesbos, Anacreon, an Ionian, must be classed, because he too sings simple songs of personal feeling. But Anacreon is not to be compared with Alcæus and Sappho in inspiration and genuine emotion. He has plenty of grace, plenty of metrical charm and polish; but the fire of genius is lacking. Anacreon is a mere courtier who adorns the palaces of princes, and free from deep or absorbing passion, sings lightly and sweetly of youths and maidens, of love and wine and pleasure. This very absence of real seriousness of purpose largely accounts for the great popularity of Anacreon's verse, which in more prosaic days was freely imitated. The admiration bestowed by the modern world upon Anacreon is founded almost entirely upon a collection of odes which pass under his name, but which have long since been proven spurious. These Anacreontics, most familiar to us in Thomas Moore's translation, are of unequal merit; some of them being very graceful and pleasing, while others are feeble and puerile.

Æolic song, besides being limited in local sphere, was very short-lived. As the expression of purely personal, individual emotion, apart from the sentiments of one's associates and fellow-citizens, song did not play that part in the Greek world with which we are so familiar to day. As a race, the Greeks were not sentimental and introspective; but were distinguished for their practical, objective manner of looking upon the world. The Greek could never forget that he was a member of a community; and even in the expression of his joys and sorrows he would not stand aloof from his fellow-men. Hence, we find that in the creative period of Greek poetry, the song to be sung by a single voice, and setting forth the feelings of the individual heart, was never wide-spread, but limited to the small field of the Lesbian school; and however remarkable its brilliance, flourished in splendor for little more than a single generation.

Not so with the poetry which voiced the sentiments and emotional life of a whole community. Lyric poetry of this popular and general character is found from early days in connection with the festivals and institutions of the various Greek States. More particularly did it suit the genius of the Dorian tribes, among whom civic and communal life was more pronounced than elsewhere. After undergoing a rich artistic development, this Dorian lyric became panhellenic in the range of its acceptance; and being adopted in Attica in the service of the gods, it enjoyed a glorious history in the evolution of Athenian greatness, and more particularly in the remarkable development of the Attic drama.

Let us first note the various forms which this public poetry assumed. The very earliest lyric poetry of Greece is connected with the worship of nature, such as the Linus-song, incidentally mentioned by Homer (Iliad, xviii. 570) and sung at the vintage as an elegy on the death of a beautiful youth who symbolized the passing of summer. Similar songs were the lament for Hyacinthus and that for Adonis, subjects which often found artistic treatment in the poets of later times.

A fruitful source of lyric song was the worship of the nature-god Dionysus or Bacchus. Like our Christmas festival, the Bacchic festivities had two sides, a sacred and a secular. Characteristic of the latter was the so-called phallic song, the seed from which was to spring Attic comedy. In the ‹Acharnians› of Aristophanes we have a mosaic of such a song, not without much of its primitive coarseness. To the more reverential side belongs the invocation of the god, the dithyrambic hymn, first mentioned by Archilochus. The dithyramb became popular at luxurious Corinth; and here it was that in the beginning of the sixth century B. C., Arion, a Lesbian, first gave it artistic form, adapted it to a chorus, and set it on the path of development, which was to lead to the tragic drama. Only one such poem has come down to us in any completeness; and that is a beautiful dithyramb of Pindar's, composed for a chorus of fifty voices. (An English rendering is given by Campbell, ‹Greek Tragedy,› page 50.)

The hymns sung in honor of other deities were probably less popular and general in character; being mainly connected with local cults and often with hereditary priesthoods. Delos and Delphi were the peculiar homes of the worship of Apollo, and there it was that the Apollo hymns chiefly flourished. The most important variety of these was the Pæan, which glorified Apollo as the giver of health and victory. In a lyrical monody of Euripides's ‹Ion,› we have what is probably the burden of one of these solemn old Delphian chants, «O Pæan, Pæan, blessed be thou, O son of Leto!»

Processional hymns, sung by a chorus to instrumental accompaniment, were a common feature of solemn festivals. These *prosodia*, as they were called, were composed by the greatest poets of the day, such as Alcman, Stesichorus, and Pindar. Processional hymns, when sung by girls only, were called *parthenia*. What beauty and splendor these processions of youths and maidens could lend to civic celebrations, may be inferred from those glorious pictures in marble adorning the frieze of the famous Parthenon.

Still another occasion when the noblest sentiments of Greek civic life found utterance in lyric song, was the celebration of victory in the national games. In this matter-of-fact age, notwithstanding our devotion to athletics and manly sports, we find it very difficult to comprehend the lofty idealism with which in days of old the contests on the banks of the Alpheus, and at other noted centres, were invested. And yet unless we realize how intense was the national and spiritual exaltation which characterized these games, we shall never regard Pindar as more than an idle babbler of meaningless words, whereas in reality he is one of the most sublime and creative geniuses in all literature.

Other occasions for the use of lyric were funeral solemnities and wedding festivities. Even as early as Homer, laments for the dead were sung by professional mourners; and with the growth of the poetic art, dirges became an important form of artistic song. Simonides and Pindar were both distinguished in this field; and in the lyrical part of tragedy the dirge is a prominent element.

The *hymenæus*, or joyous wedding song, is also known to Homer. In one of the cities represented on the shield of Achilles were depicted bridal feasts, «and with blazing torches they were leading brides from their chambers through the city, and the hymenæus swelled high. And youths were whirling in the dance, while among them flutes and harps resounded; and the women, standing at their several doors, marveled thereat.» (Iliad, xviii. 491.) The songs sung in chorus before the bridal chamber were called *epithalamia*, and were deemed worthy of the attention of the greatest lyric artists. Sappho was particularly famous for her epithalamia; but only fragments have survived, and we must form our conception of a Sapphic epithalamium from Catullus's beautiful imitation—

Vesper adest, iuvenes, consurgite.

Greek drinking-songs belong to the borderland between personal and popular verse. Some of the so-called *scolia* or catches were patriotic songs; an interesting specimen of which is the ode by Callistratus in honor of those idols of the Athenian people, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who slew the tyrant Hipparchus:—

With leaves of myrtle I'll wreathe my sword,
  Like Harmodius of yore and his comrade brave,
What time they slew the tyrant lord
  And equal laws to Athens gave.

Beloved Harmodius, thou hast not died!
  The isles of bliss hold thee, 'tis said;
There Achilles the fleet is by thy side,
  And Tydeus's son, famed Diomed.

With leaves of myrtle I'll wreathe my sword,
  Like Harmodius of yore and his comrade brave,
What time at Athene's festal board
  Through tyrant Hipparchus the sword they drave.

For aye will men sing with one accord
Of thee, loved Harmodius and thy comrade brave;
For ye did slay the tyrant lord
And equal laws to Athens gave.

Another of these songs, written by Hybrias, a Cretan, was doubtless popular with those proud young cavaliers who adopted arms as a profession, and served in various lands and under various leaders. The sentiment recalls to our minds Archilochus. Here is a spirited translation by the poet Thomas Campbell:—

My wealth's a burly spear and brand,
And a right good shield of hides untanned
Which on my arm I buckle:
With these I plow, I reap, I sow,
With these I make the sweet vintage flow,
And all around me truckle.

But your wights that take no pride to wield
A massy spear and well-made shield,
Nor joy to draw the sword—
Oh, I bring those heartless, hapless drones
Down in a trice on their marrow-bones,
To call me king and lord.

Most pleasing of the forms of popular poetry are the songs of children. The so-called flower song ran thus: « Where are my roses? Where are my violets? Where are my beautiful parsley-leaves?» « Here are your roses; here are your violets; here are your beautiful parsley-leaves.» The children of Rhodes had a pretty custom. On a day in early spring they would go round the town seeking presents from door to door, and singing the advent of the swallow:—

She is here, she is here, the swallow!
Fair seasons bringing, fair years to follow!
Her belly is white,
Her back black as night!
From your rich house
Roll forth to us
Tarts, wine, and cheese:
Or if not these,
Oatmeal and barley-cake
The swallow deigns to take.

What shall we have? Or must we hence away?
Thanks, if you give; if not, we'll make you pay!
The house-door hence we'll carry;
Nor shall the lintel tarry.
From hearth and home your wife we'll rob;
She is so small
To take her off will be an easy job!
Whate'er you give, give largess free!
Up! open, open to the swallow's call!
No grave old men, but merry children we!

Translation of J. A. Symonds.

Choral poetry of a definite artistic type seems to have been first cultivated in Sparta by Alcman about the middle of the seventh century B. C. Alcman composed hymns to the gods, marching-songs and choral songs for men and boys; but his best-known compositions were choruses for girls, which were largely dramatic in character (see special article). A pupil of Alcman's was Arion the Lesbian, who in Corinth first gave a literary form to the dithyramb. Well known is the pretty story of Arion and the dolphin. The poet had traveled through Magna Græcia, and having made a large fortune by his songs, again took ship at Tarentum for Corinth. But the sailors, who coveted his wealth, forced him to jump overboard; whereupon to their amazement a dolphin bore him safely to land.

In Stesichorus (630–550 B. C.) we meet for the first time a Sicilian poet, and one of great power. His original name was Tisias, which he resigned for another that indicated his profession as a trainer of choruses. His native city Himera was a Dorian settlement, but had a large Ionic element in the population. Catana was the scene of his death.

According to Quintilian, Stesichorus sustained in lyric form the weight of epic verse. By this is meant that the poet made use of epic material; taking such subjects as the exploits of Hercules, the tale of Orestes, or the story of Helen. But recitation was supplanted by song; and the verse of Stesichorus was such that it could be sung by choruses. It was he who permanently established the triple division of choral odes into strophes, antistrophes, and epodes. In the performance of hymns to the gods, the choristers would first dance to the right, chanting a metrical period called a strophe; then to the left through an antistrophe which corresponded in metrical detail to the strophe; while through the after-song, the dissimilar epode, they remained in their original position near the altar. The triad of strophe, antistrophe, and epode formed one artistic whole. Correspondence of strophe and antistrophe seems to have been known to

Alcman; but to Stesichorus must be given the credit for first revealing the capabilities of the choral ode, through the addition of the epode and the elaboration of artistic details. Herein he is the forerunner not only of Pindar, but also of the great dramatists.

In addition to being an originator in the structure of choral verse, Stesichorus seems to have been the first to give literary standing to two important spheres of poetry. A single surviving line,—

When in springtime twitters the swallow,—

and his references to Cydonian apples, myrtle leaves, roses, and violets, are an indication of his affinity to Theocritus and Bion. His pastoral on Daphnis was probably based on a form of Sicilian popular poetry; and his love idyls — which were utterly unlike the erotic poems of the Lesbian school, and which also, we may well believe, have a popular origin — are the beginning of Greek romantic poetry. One of these, called 'Rhadina,' told the sad story of a brother and sister who were put to death by a tyrant; and another, 'Calyce,' set forth the unhappy end of «love's sweet dream.»

When thus her lover passed away,
From her too passed the light of day.

A peculiarly interesting figure in the history of lyric poetry is Ibycus, who hails from the Italian Rhegium, another half-Dorian, half-Ionian city. He belongs to the middle of the sixth century; and in his art shows the influence both of Alcman and Stesichorus on the one hand, and on the other of the Æolian school of Lesbos. In form his verse belongs wholly to the Dorian lyric; but in giving free scope to the personal element he resembles Alcman, and when indulging his passionate erotic sentiment he is evidently under the spell of Sappho and his contemporary Anacreon. His career was divided between Sicily and distant Samos. In Sicily he followed in the steps of his master Stesichorus; producing odes of elaborate structure, based largely on epic and mythological material. But at the invitation of Polycrates, Ibycus left western Greece, and crossed the seas to adorn the court of the great tyrant of Samos.

The rule of the tyrants was a transitional period in the development of democratic life in Greece. It came after the overthrow of oligarchic power, when the people were still unprepared to assume the responsibility of government. But it was a period of great commercial progress, industrial activity, and national ambition. The several tyrants, vying with one another in their display of wealth, adorned their cities and courts with all the embellishments and luxuries that riches and art could provide. It was thus that the poets found a home with princes. Henceforth the courts of tyrants, whether at Syracuse, Athens, or Samos, are thronged with sculptors, musicians, painters, and poets; and art, which had heretofore been largely local in sphere, comes to have more and more of a panhellenic character. By Ibycus the forms of Dorian lyric are planted in Ionian Samos, even as through Arion's career at Corinth they take up their home at Ionian Athens.

The love poetry of Ibycus, though clearly expressive of personal emotion, exhibits a choral structure, and was apparently sung on public occasions. Its tone may be inferred from the following fragment:—

In spring Cydonian apple-trees,
Watered by fountains ever flowing
Through crofts unmown of maiden goddesses,
And young vines, 'neath the shade
Of shooting tendrils, tranquilly are growing.
Meanwhile for me, Love, never laid
In slumber, like a north wind glowing
With Thracian lightnings, still doth dart
Blood-parching madness on my heart,
From Kupris hurtling, stormful, wild,
Lording the man as erst the child.

Translation of John Addington Symonds.

Here as in other fragments of Ibycus we can detect an almost romantic sentiment for external nature, as evidenced by fruits and flowers, nightingales, running brooks, and starry nights. For the conception of love in the above passage, we may compare another where love looks upon the poet «from under deep-dark brows,» and Ibycus «trembles at his onset like a valiant chariot-horse which in old age must once more enter the race.» The love of Ibycus, as of Sappho, was a mighty, terrible creature, not the mischievous baby Cupid of later times.

The panhellenic range of choral lyric, first seen in the career of Ibycus, is manifested most clearly by the two greatest masters in this sphere of art, Simonides and Pindar. Both of these poets enjoyed a national reputation, and both lived through the most glorious period in Hellenic existence, the period when Greece was engaged in her life-or-death struggle with her Persian foe.

Simonides, born in the Ionian island of Ceos, became like Ibycus a court poet, and enjoyed the friendship and hospitality of the Athenian Pisistratidæ, of the powerful Aleuadæ and Scopadæ of Thessaly, and of Hiero the lordly tyrant of Syracuse. So too Pindar, born a Theban aristocrat, became famous and popular throughout the length and breadth of the whole Greek world. He was intimate with the kings of Macedon, and with the tyrants of Thessaly, Syracuse, and African Cyrene. He sings of Ægina, Corinth, Argos, and the various cities of Sicily. His heroes hail from all parts of the Hellenic domains, and win their laurels in those great centres of national unity, the sacred seats of Pythian Apollo, Isthmian Poseidon, Nemean and Olympian Zeus. At Lindos, in the island of Rhodes, the seventh Olympian was set up on the walls of Athene's temple in letters of gold. Especially at Athens was Pindar held in high esteem. Not only did he receive a gift of money, but his statue was erected near the temple of Ares, and he was made Athenian *proxenus*, or State representative at Thebes. A century after his death, when Alexander the Great destroyed Thebes, the only private house left standing was that of Pindar, and among the few citizens who were spared a life of slavery were the descendants of Pindar. Pindar, like Euripides, was more than a mere citizen of a single State: his Muse and his fame were panhellenic.

On Simonides and Pindar, however, we have no right to dwell, as they will be found treated in separate articles; but a word may be spared for Bacchylides, the nephew and disciple of Simonides, who was numbered by the Greeks among their nine great lyric writers. He too was intimate with Hiero, and most of his poetry was written to grace the refined and luxurious life of a court. Bacchylides followed closely in the steps of his uncle, and was an elegant and finished writer; but his personality and fame are almost lost in those of his more distinguished relative.* He appears to have given a choral character to banqueting-songs and songs of love, though the following ode shows how closely he is allied in thought to Anacreon's school:—

When the wine-cup freely flows,
  Soothing is the mellow force,
Vanquishing the drinker's heart,
  Rousing hope on Love's sweet course.

Love with bounteous Bacchus joined
  All with proudest thoughts can dower;
Wallèd towns the drinker scales,
  Dreams of universal power.

Ivory and gold enrich his home;
  Corn-ships o'er the dazzling sea
Bear him Egypt's untold wealth:
  Thus he soars in fancy free.

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* A number of complete poems by Bacchylides have recently been discovered, but at the time of writing have not yet been published. Some account of them is given in the London Athenæum for December 26th, 1896, page 907.

But Bacchylides was no optimist. «'Tis best for mortals,» he cries, «not to have been born, or to look upon the light of the sun. No mortal is happy all his days.» In one of the pæans of Bacchylides we have a foretaste of Aristophanes, who in the lyric songs of his 'Peace' dwells upon the same theme.

To MORTAL men Peace giveth these good things:
Wealth, and the flowers of honey-throated song;
The flame that springs
On carven altars from fat sheep and kine,
Slain to the gods in heaven; and all day long,
Games for glad youths, and flutes, and wreaths, and circling wine.
Then in the steely shield swart spiders weave
Their web and dusky woof;
Rust to the pointed spear and sword doth cleave;
The brazen trump sounds no alarms;
Nor is sleep harried from our eyes aloof,
But with sweet rest my bosom warms:
The streets are thronged with lovely men and young,
And hymns in praise of boys like flames to heaven are flung.

Translation of J. A. Symonds.

Pindar is the last of the great writers whose poetry was exclusively lyric. With the rise of the drama, lyric poetry came to be regarded mainly as the handmaid of tragedy and comedy; and though a few forms, such as the dithyramb, continued to enjoy an independent existence, still these either failed to attract real genius, and so fell into decline, or they suffered from the tendency to magnify the accompaniments of music and dance, and thus lost the virtue of a high poetical tone.

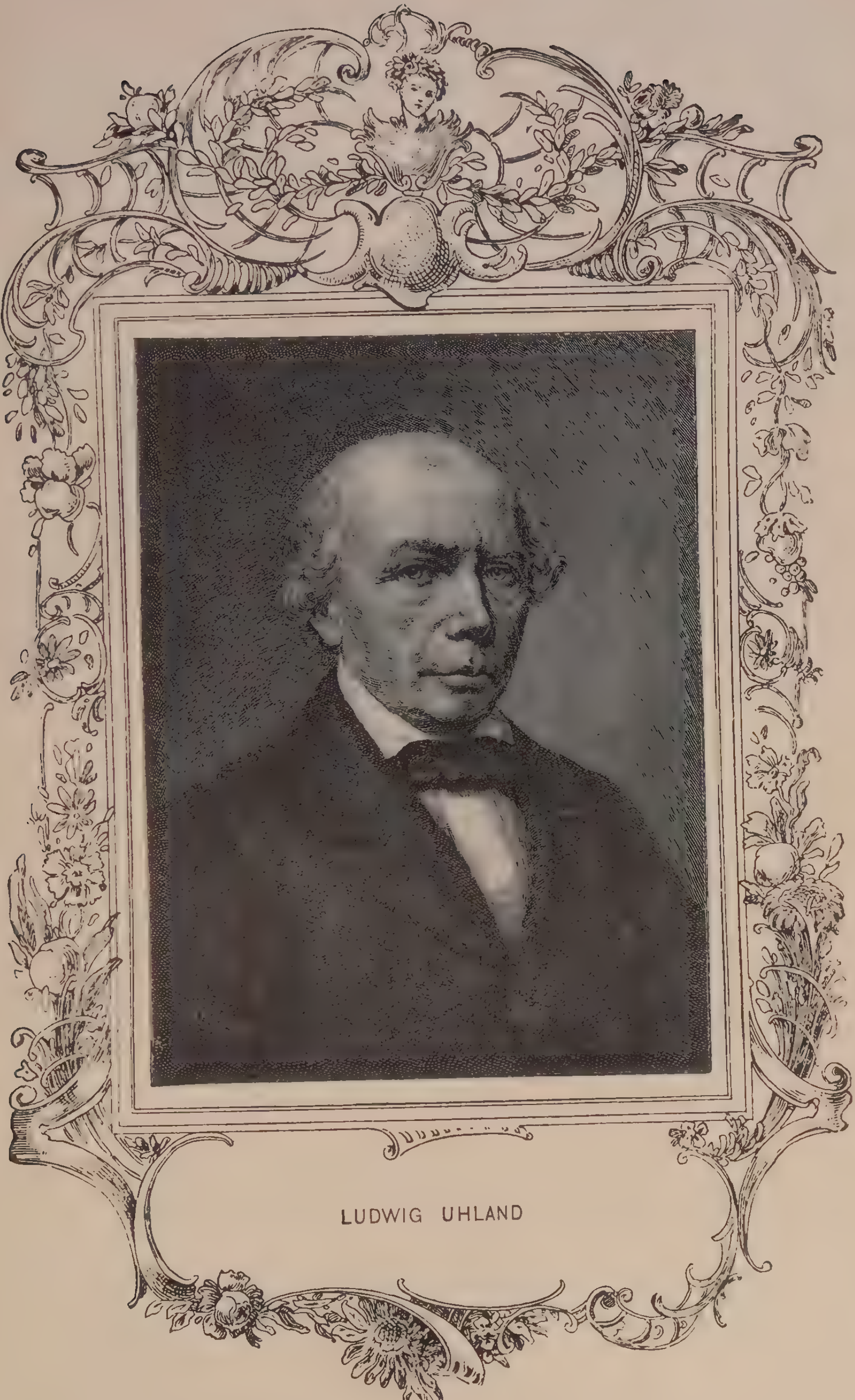
It is however a peculiarity of Greek poetry that none of the earlier forms are completely lost, but are absorbed in the later. When we reach the drama, we find that this splendid creation of Hellenic genius gathers up in one beautiful and harmonious web the various threads of the poetic art.

The drama, as is well known, originated in the songs which were sung in the festivals of Bacchus. Tragedy is literally the *goat-ode;* that is, the choral song chanted by satyrs, the goat-footed attendants of Bacchus. At first, then, tragedy was of a purely lyric character,—a story in song with expressive dance and musical accompaniment. The further history of tragedy and comedy is, in brief, the development of dialogue and the harmonizing of the lyric and dramatic elements. The greatest impetus was given to dialogue in Attica through the recitations of Homeric poetry by professional bards. Epic metre, however, was unsuited to dramatic dialogue, which, after essaying the lighter trochaic line, finally adopted the more conversational iambic verse which Archilochus had used so effectively for satire.

Already at the end of the sixth century B. C., the drama presents the twofold character which in Greece it never lost, the chorus and the dialogue, the former due to Dorian lyric poetry, the latter to the Ionic verse-forms of Archilochus. With the full development of dramatic form the lyric was reduced from its supreme position to an inferior station, in which it should no longer be the controlling element, but merely the efficient and beautiful handmaid of dramatic dialogue. In Æschylus the lyric still assumes undue proportions; in Sophocles the lyric and dramatic are blended in perfect harmony; but in Euripides the work of disintegration has set in, and the lyric tends to become a mere artistic appendage.

All works on Greek literature treat this subject more or less fully. Flach's ‘Geschichte der Griechischen Lyrik’ (Tübingen: 1883) is the most complete work on the whole field. Symonds's ‘Greek Poets’ and Jebb's ‘Classical Greek Poetry’ are both excellent. The Greek student finds Bergk's ‘Poetæ Lyrici Græci’ (Leipzig: 1882) indispensable. An attractive and convenient edition of the ‘Poetæ Lyrici Græci Minores’ is that by Pomtow (Leipzig: 1885). Farnell's ‘Greek Lyric Poetry’ (Longmans: 1891) is confined to the «melic» writers. The most popular treatment of Greek music will be found in Naumann's ‘History of Music,’ edited by Sir F. Gore Ouseley (Cassell & Co.). Chappell's ‘History of Music’ (London: 1874) is a standard work. Monro's ‘The Modes of Ancient Greek Music’ (Clarendon Press: 1894) is intended for the specialist.

H Rushton Fairclough



LUDWIG UHLAND

JOHANN LUDWIG UHLAND

(1787–1862)

BY CHARLES HARVEY GENUNG

JOHANN LUDWIG UHLAND was born on April 26th, 1787, at Tübingen, where now his statue stands. Although the place itself is a dull little university town, the region round about is filled with romantic associations. Near by are the ancestral castles of the Hohenstaufens and Hohenzollerns, of the family that dominated the brilliant period of Walther von der Vogelweide and of that under which the German empire regained her ancient lustre. Through the valley runs the highway along which swept the armies of the Suabian emperors to their new dominions in Italy. It was amid these romantic memories that Uhland's genius grew to maturity. In Tübingen he was educated, and there in 1810 he took his degree in law. For two years he practiced in the ministry of justice at Stuttgart. When in 1815 the question of a constitution was precipitated by the King of Würtemberg, Uhland burst into patriotic verse, and in that year he published his first collection of poems. He sprang at once into unbounded popularity. Goethe, who recognized that such popular enthusiasm implied merit somewhere, found it in the ballads; and when Uhland went into politics Goethe remonstrated: there were many men in Suabia, he said, capable of serving the State, but there was only one such poet as Uhland. Nevertheless the political career which the poet began in 1819, when he was elected to the assembly, was continued at intervals throughout his life. He received in 1829 the coveted professorship of German language and literature at the University of Tübingen; but since he was not permitted to take his seat in the Assembly at the same time, he resigned from his congenial post in 1833. He was one of the most prominent of the opponents to the royal Constitution. In 1839 he refused re-election; and lived in retirement until in 1848 he was elected to the National Assembly at Frankfort.

Aside from politics and poetry, Uhland was, like Rückert, a distinguished scholar. Schérer regarded him as one of the founders of the science of Romance philology; and his contributions to Germanistic studies are of permanent value. One exquisite monograph, in which the qualities of poet and of scholar are equally manifest, is still a standard classic: the essay on Walther von der Vogelweide, published in 1821, and dealing with the most fascinating theme in the whole range of German studies,—the greatest of the minnesingers, from whom descended the fairest traditions of that golden age to the wooden age of the mastersingers, to be at last rejuvenated and once more made fruitful by the Romantic poets, and chief among them by Uhland himself. If the politician, as Goethe feared, threatened to consume the poet, these scholarly pursuits served only to sustain and stimulate the genius of the singer. All these publications relating to old German and Romance philology have since appeared in eight volumes, under the collective title of ‹Schriften zur Geschichte der Dichtung und Sage› (Contributions to the History of Poetry and Legend).

But it is the poet Uhland that the world knows and loves. He wrote some three hundred and fifty poems, fully half of them masterpieces, which have become an essential part of German culture. «It is inconceivable,» wrote Herman Grimm, «that they should ever grow old.» The first collection of poems, of 1815, was gradually enlarged in the subsequent editions. In 1875 they had reached their sixtieth edition, and this average of one edition annually has since been increased. His two plays, ‹Ernst, Herzog von Schwaben› (Ernest, Duke of Suabia) and ‹Ludwig der Bayer› (Louis the Bavarian), although spirited examples of the historical drama, could not retain their foothold on the stage. Uhland is probably the most popular German poet after Schiller. In him Professor Francke sees united the fine spirit of Walther von der Vogelweide and the epic impressiveness of the Nibelungenlied. He revealed to Germany her better self mirrored in her shining past.

As a lyric poet, Uhland stands in the foremost rank among the many singers of his tuneful race. After Goethe, he is with Eichendorff and Heine the favorite of the composers; and this is one of the surest tests of a poet's lyric quality. The constant temptation which he offers to translators, only to lure them on to half-successes, is another test. No lyrics except Heine's, and not excepting Goethe's, have ever been so often attempted in English as Uhland's. Through these innumerable versions, as well as through the universal medium of music, his poetry has become a part of the world's lyric repertoire. Among the Romantic poets he occupies a peculiar place; he is as far removed from the intellectual kite-flying of Novalis and Brentano as he is from the massive might of Kleist and the austerity of Platen: but like Kleist he brought order into the lawlessness of Romanticism, and turned it «from caprice to poetry»; like Platen he insisted upon finished form and faultless measures. He rescued stately figures for us from the knightly past, and summoned spirits from the dreamland of ancient legend. Solemn haunting echoes of the past are borne to us in his verse across the centuries, and all these quaint and shadowy recollections of the age of wonders he has made a permanent part of our modern culture. His idea of the romantic may be inferred from his saying, «A region is romantic when spirits walk there.» But it is as if he saw the spirits and their legendary train pass over from afar, as one watches the play of changing color on the floating clouds of sunset; his feet the while are firmly planted on the earth. He never loses his foothold in reality. Nor does he glorify the past to the point of despising the present. He is genuine and sane. In him the romantic elements as we find them in Goethe are more perfectly manifest than in any other poet of the Romantic group. With fewest exceptions, his ballads and lyrics are little masterpieces of dramatic narrative and musical form. Uhland's position in the history of German poetry is best defined in the apt paradox of David Strauss, who called him «the classic of Romanticism.»

Chas. H. Genung

THE SHEPHERD'S SONG ON THE LORD'S DAY

The Lord's own day is here!
Alone I kneel on this broad plain:
A matin-bell just sounds; again
'Tis silence, far and near.

Here kneel I on the sod:
Oh, deep amazement, strangely felt!
As though, unseen, vast numbers knelt
And prayed with me to God.

Yon heaven, afar and near,—
So bright, so glorious seems its cope
As though e'en now its gates would ope;—
The Lord's own day is here!

Translation of W. W. Skeat.

THE LUCK OF EDENHALL

Of Edenhall the youthful lord
Bids sound the festal trumpet's call;
He rises at the banquet board,
And cries, 'mid the drunken revelers all,
«Now bring me the Luck of Edenhall!»

The butler hears the words with pain,—
The house's oldest seneschal,—
Takes slow from its silken cloth again
The drinking-glass of crystal tall:
They call it *The Luck of Edenhall.*

Then said the lord, «This glass to praise,
Fill with red wine from Portugal!»
The graybeard with trembling hand obeys:
A purple light shines over all;
It beams from the Luck of Edenhall.

Then speaks the lord, and waves it light:—
«This glass of flashing crystal tall
Gave to my sires the Fountain-Sprite;
She wrote in it, *If this glass doth fall,*
Farewell then, O Luck of Edenhall!

«'Twas right a goblet the fate should be
Of the joyous race of Edenhall!
We drink deep draughts right willingly;
And willingly ring, with merry call,
Kling! klang! to the Luck of Edenhall!»

First rings it deep, and full, and mild,
Like to the song of a nightingale;
Then like the roar of a torrent wild;
Then mutters at last, like the thunder's fall,
The glorious Luck of Edenhall.

«For its keeper, takes a race of might
The fragile goblet of crystal tall:
It has lasted longer than is right:—
Kling! klang! with a harder blow than all
Will I try the Luck of Edenhall!»

As the goblet, ringing, flies apart,
Suddenly cracks the vaulted hall;

And through the rift the flames upstart:
The guests in dust are scattered all
With the breaking Luck of Edenhall!

In storms the foe, with fire and sword!
He in the night had scaled the wall;
Slain by the sword lies the youthful lord,
But holds in his hand the crystal tall,
The shattered Luck of Edenhall.

On the morrow the butler gropes alone,
The graybeard,—in the desert hall
He seeks his lord's burnt skeleton;
He seeks in the dismal ruin's fall
The shards of the Luck of Edenhall.

«The stone wall,» saith he, «doth fall aside;
Down must the stately columns fall:
Glass is this earth's Luck and Pride;
In atoms shall fall this earthly ball,
One day, like the Luck of Edenhall.»

Translation of H. W. Longfellow.

THE MINSTREL'S CURSE

There stood in former ages a castle high and large;
Above the slope it glistened far down to ocean's marge;
Around it like a garland bloomed gardens of delight,
Where sparkled cooling fountains, with sun-bow glories dight.

There sat a haughty monarch, who lands in war had won;
With aspect pale and gloomy he sat upon the throne:
His thoughts are fraught with terrors, his glance of fury blights,
His words are galling scourges, with victims' blood he writes.

Once moved towards this castle a noble minstrel pair,
The one with locks all golden, snow-white the other's hair:
With harp in hand, the graybeard a stately courser rode;
In flower of youth, beside him his tall companion strode.

Then spake the gray-haired father: «Be well prepared, my son:
Think o'er our loftiest ballads, breathe out thy fullest tone;
Thine utmost skill now summon,—joy's zest and sorrow's smart;—
'Twere well to move with music the monarch's stony heart.»

Now in the spacious chamber the minstrels twain are seen;
High on the throne in splendor are seated king and queen:
The king with terrors gleaming, a ruddy Northern Light;
The queen all grace and sweetness, a full moon soft and bright.

The graybeard swept the harp-strings,—they sounded wondrous clear;
The notes with growing fullness thrilled through the listening ear:
Pure as the tones of angels the young man's accents flow;
The old man's gently murmur, like spirit-voices low.

They sing of love and springtime, of happy golden days,
Of manly worth and freedom, of truth and holy ways;
They sing of all things lovely, that human hearts delight,
They sing of all things lofty, that human souls excite.

The courtier train around them forget their jeerings now;
The king's defiant soldiers in adoration bow;
The queen to tears now melted, with rapture now possessed,
Throws down to them in guerdon a rosebud from her breast.

«Have ye misled my people, and now my wife suborn?»
Shouts out the ruthless monarch, and shakes with wrath and scorn;
He whirls his sword—like lightning the young man's breast it smote,
That 'stead of golden legends, bright life-blood filled his throat.

Dispersed, as by a tempest, was all the listening swarm;
The youth sighs out his spirit upon his master's arm,
Who round him wraps his mantle, and sets him on the steed,
There tightly binds him upright, and from the court doth speed.

Before the olden gateway, there halts the minstrel old;
His golden harp he seizes, above all harps extolled:
Against a marble pillar he snaps its tuneful strings;
Through castle and through garden his voice of menace rings:—

«Woe, woe to thee, proud castle! ne'er let sweet tones resound
Henceforward through thy chambers, nor harp's nor voice's sound:
Let sighs and tramp of captives and groans dwell here for aye,
Till retribution sink thee in ruin and decay.

«Woe, woe to you, fair gardens, in summer light that glow:
To you this pallid visage, deformed by death, I show,
That every leaf may wither, and every fount run dry,—
That ye in future ages a desert heap may lie.

"Woe, woe to thee, curst tyrant! that art the minstrel's bane:
Be all thy savage strivings for glory's wreath in vain!
Be soon thy name forgotten, sunk deep in endless night,
Or, like a last death murmur, exhaled in vapor light!"

The graybeard's curse was uttered; heaven heard his bitter cry:
The walls are strewn in fragments, the halls in ruins lie;
Still stands one lofty column to witness olden might—
E'en this, already shivered, may crumble down to-night.

Where once were pleasant gardens, is now a wasted land;
No tree there lends its shadow, nor fount bedews the sand:
The monarch's name recordeth no song, nor lofty verse;
'Tis wholly sunk—forgotten! Such is the Minstrel's Curse!

Translation of W. W. Skeat.

ENTERTAINMENT

I STOPPED at an inn one day to dine:
The host was a generous fellow;
A golden apple, for a sign,
Hung out on a branch, so mellow.

It was the good old apple-tree
Himself so nobly dined me;
Sweet fare and sparkling juices he
Was pleased and proud to find me.

To his green-house came many a guest,
Light-wingèd and light-hearted;
They sang their best, they ate his best,
Then up they sprang and departed.

I found a bed to rest my head—
A bed of soft green clover;
The host a great cool shadow spread
For a quilt, and covered me over.

I asked him what I had to pay:
I saw his head shake slightly;—
Oh, blest be he, for ever and aye,
Who treated me so politely.

Translation of Charles T. Brooks.

THE MOUNTAIN BOY

The shepherd of the Alps am I;
The castles far beneath me lie;
Here first the ruddy sunlight gleams,
Here linger last the parting beams.
The mountain boy am I!

Here is the river's fountain-head,—
I drink it from its stony bed;
As forth it leaps with joyous shout,
I seize it ere it gushes out.
The mountain boy am I!

The mountain is my own domain:
It calls its storms from sea and plain;
From north to south they howl afar;
My voice is heard amid their war.
The mountain boy am I!

The lightnings far beneath me lie;
High stand I here in clear blue sky;
I know them, and to them I call,
"In quiet leave my father's hall."
The mountain boy am I!

And when the tocsin sounds alarms,
And mountain bale-fires call to arms,
Then I descend,—I join my king,
My sword I wave, my lay I sing.
The mountain boy am I!

Anonymous Translation in Longfellow's 'Poets and Poetry of Europe.'

THE CASTLE BY THE SEA

"Hast thou seen that lordly castle,
That castle by the sea?
Golden and red above it
The clouds float gorgeously.

"And fain it would stoop downward
To the mirrored wave below;
And fain it would soar upward
In the evening's crimson glow."—

«Well have I seen that castle,
That castle by the sea,
And the moon above it standing,
And the mist rise solemnly.»—

«The winds and the waves of ocean,
Had they a merry chime?
Didst thou hear, from those lofty chambers,
The harp and the minstrel's rhyme?»—

«The winds and the waves of ocean,
They rested quietly;
But I heard on the gale a sound of wail,
And tears came to mine eye.»—

«And sawest thou on the turrets
The king and his royal bride,
And the wave of their crimson mantles,
And the golden crown of pride?

«Led they not forth, in rapture,
A beauteous maiden there,
Resplendent as the morning sun,
Beaming with golden hair?»—

«Well saw I the ancient parents,
Without the crown of pride:
They were moving slow, in weeds of woe;
No maiden was by their side!»

Translation of H. W. Longfellow.

THE PASSAGE

Many a year is in its grave,
Since I crossed this restless wave;
And the evening, fair as ever,
Shines on ruin, rock, and river.

Then in this same boat beside
Sat two comrades old and tried,—
One with all a father's truth,
One with all the fire of youth.

One on earth in silence wrought,
And his grave in silence sought;

But the younger, brighter form
Passed in battle and in storm.

So, whene'er I turn my eye
Back upon the days gone by,
Saddening thoughts of friends come o'er me,—
Friends that closed their course before me.

But what binds us, friend to friend,
But that soul with soul can blend?
Soul-like were those hours of yore:
Let us walk in soul once more.

Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee,—
Take,—I give it willingly;
For, invisible to thee,
Spirits twain have crossed with me.

Translation of Sarah Taylor Austin.

THE NUN

In the silent cloister garden,
Beneath the pale moonshine,
There walked a lovely maiden,
And tears were in her eyne.

«Now, God be praised! my loved one
Is with the blest above:
Now man is changed to angel,
And angels I may love.»

She stood before the altar
Of Mary, mother mild,
And on the holy maiden
The Holy Virgin smiled.

Upon her knees she worshiped
And prayed before the shrine,
And heavenward looked—till Death came
And closed her weary eyne.

From the Foreign Quarterly Review.

THE SERENADE

"What sounds so sweet awake me?
What fills me with delight?
O mother, look! who sings thus
So sweetly through the night?"

"I hear not, child, I see not;
Oh, sleep thou softly on!
Comes now to serenade thee,
Thou poor sick maiden, none!"

"It is not earthly music
That fills me with delight;
I hear the angels call me:
O mother dear, good night!"

From the Foreign Quarterly Review.

TO ——

Upon a mountain's summit
There might I with thee stand,
And o'er the tufted forest,
Look down upon the land;
There might my finger show thee
The world in vernal shine,
And say, if all mine own were,
That all were mine and thine.

Into my bosom's deepness,
Oh, could thine eye but see,
Where all the songs are sleeping
That God e'er gave to me!
There would thine eye perceive it,
If aught of good be mine,—
Although I may not name thee,—
That aught of good is thine.

From the Foreign Quarterly Review.

THE SUNKEN CROWN

ALOFT on yonder hillside
A little cot doth stand;
You look from off its threshold
Far out upon the land.
There sits a free-born peasant
Upon the bank at even,
And whets his scythe, and singeth
His grateful song to Heaven.

Below on the lake are falling
The silent shadows down;
Beneath the wave lies hidden,
All rich and rare, a crown.
In the darksome night it sparkles
With rubies and sapphires gay;
But no man recks where it lieth
From the times so old and gray.

Translation of H. W. Dulcken.

A MOTHER'S GRAVE

A GRAVE, O mother, has been dug for thee
Within a still—to thee a well-known—place.
A shadow all its own above shall be,
And flowers its threshold too shall ever grace.

And even as thou died'st, so in thy urn
Thou'lt lie unconscious of both joy and smart:
And daily to my thought shalt thou return;
I dig for thee this grave within my heart.

Translation of Frederick W. Ricord.

THE CHAPEL

THERE aloft the chapel standeth,
Peering down the valley still;
There beneath, by fount and meadow,
Rings the shepherd's carol shrill.

Sadly booms the bell's slow knelling,
Solemn sounds the last lament;

Hushed are all the boy's loud carols,
Still he stands with ears attent.

There aloft are borne to burial
They who filled the vale with glee;
There aloft, O youthful shepherd,
Men shall chant the dirge for thee!

Translation of W. W. Skeat.

THE SMITHYING OF SIGFRID'S SWORD

Sigfrid was young, and haughty, and proud,
When his father's home he disavowed.

In his father's house he would not abide:
He would wander over the world so wide.

He met many a knight in wood and field
With shining sword and glittering shield.

But Sigfrid had only a staff of oak:
He held him shamed in sight of the folk.

And as he went through a darksome wood,
He came where a lowly smithy stood.

There was iron and steel in right good store;
And a fire that did bicker, and flame, and roar.

«O smithying-carle, good master of mine,
Teach me this forging craft of thine.

«Teach me the lore of shield and blade,
And how the right good swords are made!»

He struck with the hammer a mighty blow,
And the anvil deep in the ground did go.

He struck: through the wood the echoes rang,
And all the iron in flinders sprang.

And out of the last left iron bar
He fashioned a sword that shone as a star.

«Now have I smithied a right good sword,
And no man shall be my master and lord;

"And giants and dragons of wood and field,
I shall meet like a hero, under shield."

Translation of Elizabeth Craigmyle.

ICHABOD: THE GLORY HAS DEPARTED

I RIDE through a dark, dark Land by night,
Where moon is none and no stars lend light,
And rueful winds are blowing;
Yet oft have I trodden this way ere now,
With summer zephyrs a-fanning my brow,
And the gold of the sunshine glowing.

I roam by a gloomy Garden-wall;
The death-stricken leaves around me fall,
And the night blast wails its dolors:
How oft with my love I have hitherward strayed
When the roses flowered, and all I surveyed
Was radiant with Hope's own colors!

But the gold of the sunshine is shed and gone,
And the once bright roses are dead and wan,
And my love in her low grave molders;
And I ride through a dark, dark Land by night,
With never a star to bless me with light,
And the Mantle of Age on my shoulders.

Translation of James C. Mangan.

ARMANDO PALACIO VALDÉS

(1853–)

BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

BEFORE heaven! your Worship should read what I have read,» exclaims an honest inn-keeper in ‹Don Quixote,› concerning Felixmarte of Hyrcania, who, «with one back-stroke, cut asunder five giants through the middle. . . . At another time he encountered a great and powerful army of about a million six hundred thousand soldiers, all armed from top to toe, and routed them as if they had been a flock of sheep.»

This was said in response to a protest against his wasting his time over the foolish books of chivalry of the epoch, and a recommendation that he should read, instead, the real exploits of Gonsalvo de Cordova, the Great Captain, who had in fact put to flight a dozen men or so with his own hand. The paragraph is a useful one, as throwing light on the insatiate nature of the thirst for mere adventure and movement in fiction. It has no limits; but was just as impatient of the splendid feats of arms, battles, sieges, and romantic doings — as we should consider them — of all kinds, that were then of daily occurrence, as the same school is at present of the happenings of real life all about us. The change is one of relation rather than spirit; and the school of criticism that demands only the startling and exceptional, and eschews all else as tame, is still, numerically at least, superior to any other. How much nobler an aim is that of Palacio Valdés and his kind, who show us feeling, beauty, and innate interest everywhere throughout common existence; and who lighten and dignify the otherwise commonplace days as they pass, by leading us to look for these things. Nothing is truer than that the purpose of the arts is to please; but a Spanish proverb also well says: «Show me what pleases you and I will tell you what you are.»

Armando Palacio Valdés, in some respects the most entertaining and natural, and perhaps all in all the most satisfactory, of the later Spanish novelists, was born October 4th, 1853. His birthplace was Entralgo, — a small village near Oviedo, the capital of the province of Asturias, in the northwest of Spain. He received his earlier education at the small marine town of Avilés, and at Oviedo; and then took his degree in law at the University of Madrid. The smaller towns mentioned above, and others where he has lived, have been celebrated under assumed names in his novels. He is not averse to admitting that Entralgo is «Riofrió,» of ‹El Idyl de un Enfermo› (The Idyl of a Convalescent), 1884. A young man with shattered health, from Madrid, goes there to recuperate. There are smoking chimneys in the neighborhood,—for modern enterprise, largely English, is developing a treasure of mineral wealth in these northern provinces; but the invalid opens his window the morning after his arrival upon a delightful fresh prospect of mountains and vale, that at once begins to bring a balm of healing to his lungs. Valdés excels in the description of the scenery in which he places his real and moving characters, but he uses the gift with praiseworthy moderation. So close and appreciative an observer could not fail to give us accurate pictures of the life of the capital of Madrid, as in ‹Aguas Fuertes› (Etchings), 1885, and ‹Espuma› (Foam), 1890; but though the former volume of graceful sketches is playfully humorous, the tone of the latter is over-full of sophistication, and in a way depressing. He is distinctly at his best in depicting existence in the rural communities or minor towns. He still spends a part of his summer in an ancestral homestead at Entralgo.

Avilés is the «Nieva» of his exquisite ‹Marta y Maria› (Martha and Mary), 1883. The scene opens with a crowd of good people at night elbowing one another in the street—and in the rain too—to get near the lighted house where a party is in progress, so as to hear the rare singing of Maria, that floats out at the windows. This is a book among books. Apart from its many charms in the lighter way; apart from the delectable traits of the sweetly practical, material younger sister, Martha, the plot of the book is raised to a great dignity by the conflict between earth and heaven shown in the unusual character of Maria. She is the petted elder daughter of the house, young and beautiful, and already betrothed; but she becomes possessed by an unworldly ideal of devotion, that leads her to desire to rival the mediæval saints. She shakes off, or gently loosens, all the human ties that hold her; endeavors to practice the rigors of the most cruel asceticism; and finally arrives at being apprehended in her father's drawing-room by a file of soldiers, who lead her away, for having a part in a plot to restore the Carlist pretender to the throne of Spain. It was her conscientious belief, pushed to the point of fanaticism, that the pure cause of religion was thus going to be greatly advanced. This novel has been translated into English under the title of ‹The Marquis of Peñalta.›

Yet another rainy night, a wild and furious one of winter, is chosen for the opening scene of ‹El Maestrante› (The Grandee), 1893;

at «Lancia,» which is really Oviedo. It seems to have been a gloomy place in the early fifties; and the story, which turns upon the martyrdom of a little child, by a family whose sanity we cannot but suspect, leaves a sombre impression in keeping with the surroundings. Candás, the place where Valdés married (called «Rodillero» in the book), furnishes an appropriate setting for 'José,' 1885; an idyl of fisher life, that in its main lines calls to mind the similar work of Pereda. Candás is represented as the most striking of all the maritime villages of Asturias, consisting as it does of a handful of houses piled one above another in a chasm that catches the hollow echoing of the sea; it opens upon a breaking surf, and a beach filled with fishing-boats and fishing-nets.

Valdés devoted himself with especial ardor at Madrid to studies in political and moral science; and looked forward to a professorship in those branches. He was made first secretary for the section covering those departments at the Atheneum; a very useful semi-public institution with a fine lecture-hall and library, and a chosen membership of seven hundred persons. At twenty-two he was the editor of an important scientific magazine, La Revista Europea (The European Review). He wrote many scientific articles; and much excellent criticism, later gathered into books, on 'The Spanish Novelists,' 'The Orators of the Atheneum,' and the like. His first novel, 'Señorito Octavio,' 1881, appeared when he had reached the age of twenty-four. He himself finds some fault with it—repents of certain exaggerations in the book. The fault would seem to be towards the close, in a forced strain of sentiment and a lurid conclusion; but apart from this, it abounds in the same sweet, humorous, and generally engaging qualities as all his later books. It gave at the very start a promise that has been brilliantly fulfilled.

'Riverita' (Young Rivera), 1886, treats largely of the career of a young man about town. The author's vein of droll humor is indulged in a cousin of Riverita's,—Enrique, a gilded youth, who frequents the company of bull-fighters, and takes part in an amateur bull-fight himself. The true devotee of the sport, he holds, never even perceives its gory features; his attention being fixed upon the deeds of valor of the champions, and their artistic dealing with the bull. «And besides,» he says, «I suppose you have seen dead animals at the butcher-shop. And you eat sausages, don't you?»

'Riverita' leads us on to a sequel in 'Maximina.' At the quaint little port of Pasajes, close to San Sebastian, Riverita wooes and marries a sweet young girl of modest and shrinking nature; they move to Madrid; a child is born, and she dies. It is impossible not to see here a record of some part of the interior life of the author. On the day on which he was thirty years old, he married at Candás a young girl of sixteen. The child-wife died a year and a half later, leaving him an infant son. Marriage, birth, death,—what events are more ordinary, yet what more momentous? They are described in ‘Maximina’ in a way that touches the chords of the deepest and truest human feeling. ‘El Cuarto Poder’ (The Fourth Estate, or The Press), 1888, takes its title from the founding of a newspaper in a primitive little community; but the real scheme of the action turns round the breaking off of an engagement between plain sincere Cecilia and a steady-going young engineer, Gonzalo, by the machinations of a pretty younger sister and arch-coquette, Venturita. The opening chapter—where, on the occasion of a gala night at the theatre, all the leading characters of the little place are introduced—is masterly piece of exposition and of social history. ‘La Hermana San Sulpicio’ (Sister San Sulpicio), 1889, is a gay, bright piece of light comedy; showing how an engaging young novice, who has mistaken her vocation in entering a convent, finds much more happiness in leaving it and marrying her devoted suitor. Its scene is laid at Seville; as that of the much less satisfactory ‘Los Majos de Cadiz’ (The Dandies of Cadiz), 1896, is at the more southern Andalusian city. These are dandies of the lower class who wear short jackets and gay sashes, and their social relations are unpleasant. In ‘La Fe’ (Faith), 1892, an earnest young priest, Gil Lastra, undertakes to convert a notorious skeptic, Montesinos, and is himself disastrously perverted. ‘El Origen del Pensamiento’ (The Origin of Thought), 1894, appeared in an English version—much mutilated, however—in an American magazine. An erratic old man, Don Pantaleón, conceives the notion that if he can only take off a portion of some one's skull, he can see the actual process of the secretion of thought, and thus confer great benefit on the human race. No other victim offering, he kidnaps a sweet little grandchild of his own; but happily the child is rescued in time—at the very last moment.

Many, or most, of these books have been translated into several other languages, and have everywhere met with warm favor. There are in a few of them incidents and personages treated with a freedom more approximating that which French, rather than English, writers allow themselves in certain matters; but it can truthfully be said that the tone is everywhere one of exemplary morality. Regret and reproach, not a flippant levity, are the feelings made to attend the contemplation of these scenes. Palacio Valdés is particularly happy in his feminine types; above all, those of young girls just budding into womanhood. Carmen, Marta, Rosa, Teresa, Maximina, Julita, Venturita, and Sister San Sulpicio may be named; there is one or more of them in almost every book. These, in their several ways, are all depicted with a most natural and playful touch; they have the very essence of youth; they have a delicate charm, sensuous yet pure, and they are not merely pretty to look at, but their talk scintillates with intelligence. In some respects Valdés's women recall those of Thomas Hardy, in other respects they are like Turgénieff's. In that field he is unequaled by any Spanish contemporary.

William Henry Bishop

[The following translations are from the original Spanish, by William Henry Bishop, for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›]

THE BELLE OF THE VILLAGE STORE

From ‹Señorito Octavio›

She had just completed her eighteenth year; her skin was as white as milk, her hair red as gold. Her mother was a blonde of the same type also, and yet the mother had never passed for a beauty. Carmen's eyes were blue,—a deep dark blue, like that of the sea; and one's imagination plunged into their mysterious depths, and fancied he might find there palaces of crystal and enchanting gardens, as in the hidden caves of ocean. It seemed scarcely credible that such a rosebud was the daughter of that rough pig of a Don Marcelino. While yet a child, they had been wont to call her « The Little Angel. » She used to be much put out over it, too, and would run home to the house weeping when, on the letting out of school, the children would follow her, giving her this complimentary nickname. And in fact it would be difficult to imagine anything sweeter, more charming, in the ethereal unworldly way, than Carmen had been at twelve years old. On arriving at woman's estate, the « angel » in her had become somewhat obscured; that celestial epithet had been a little shorn of its accuracy. Yet nothing had been lost by the change; for to the gloriously pure, sweet lines of the girlish figure had been added certain terrestrial contours and material roundnesses that became her to a marvel.

I confess a liking for women with this mingling of heaven and earth; there is nothing that approaches it in thorough fascination. Hence it has happened to me, not merely once but many times, in the course of this narration, to fancy myself throwing down my pen, and introducing myself among the minor personages of the story, for the pure pleasure of paying court with the rest to the lovely daughter of Don Marcelino. Suppose now that she had not given me the mitten; — anything whatever, you know, is within the field of supposition, and yet it is a bold one; for, even apart from the aforesaid winning curves, it was stated in Vegalora that she had a very pretty fortune of her own. If Don Marcelino had accepted me for a son-in-law, I should have been at the present moment a clerk, measuring off cotton or percale by the yard, or at your service generally for whatever you might please to command, in his accredited establishment. In this way I should at any rate have escaped the humiliation and martyrdom that fall to the lot, in Spain, of the luckless wight who may, like myself, devote himself to letters or the fine arts with more liking for them than capacity; though it is true, there might have fallen upon my head other evils, of a sort from which I pray heaven to save all of you now and forever, amen!

But then who would have written this veracious history of Señorito Octavio? Galdós, Alarcón, and Valera are occupied with more august matters; and I am certain besides that they have never even set foot in the shop of Don Marcelino. While as for me, in all that relates to Vegalora, and also its district for six leagues all around, I assert — though this kind of talk may appear over-bold and conceited to some — that there is not another novelist who is worthy to loose the latchet of my shoe, in respect of knowing absolutely everything about it.

MARIA'S WAY TO PERFECTION

From ‹Marta y Maria›

One evening, after the retirement of the family and servants, mistress and maid were together in Maria's boudoir up in the tower. Maria was reading by the light of the polished metal astral lamp, while Genoveva was sitting in another chair in front of her, knitting a stocking. They would often pass an hour or two thus before going to bed, the señorita having been long accustomed to read to the small hours of the morning.

She did not seem so much occupied as usual with her reading; but would frequently put the book on the table and remain pensive for a while, her cheek resting on her hand. She would take it up in a hesitating way, but only presently to lay it down again. It was evident too by the creaking chair, as she often changed position, that she was nervous. From time to time she would fix upon Genoveva a long gaze, that seemed to betray a timid and uneasy desire, and a certain inward conflict with some thought striving for utterance. On the other hand, Genoveva, that evening, was more engrossed than usual with her stocking; weaving in among its meshes, no doubt, a multitude of more or less philosophical considerations that made it desirable for her to give convulsive nods every now and then, very much as when one is going to sleep.

At last the señorita concluded to break the silence.

«Genoveva, will you read for me this passage from the life of St. Isabel?» she asked, handing her the book.

«With all the pleasure in the world, señorita.»

«See, begin here where it says: 'When her husband—'»

Genoveva commenced to read the paragraph to herself, but Maria quickly interrupted her with—

«No, no: read it aloud.»

[Thereupon the maid reads a passage of some twenty lines, in the characteristic pious and mystical style of the Bollandist Lives of the Saints. The gist of it is that the young and lovely princess and saint, Isabel, would pass her nights and days in the practice of the most austere penances. Of these the wearing a hair-cloth shirt, and having herself scourged with the discipline by her damsels, were a portion.]

«That will do: you need not read any further. What do you think of it?»

«I have often read the identical story before.»

«Yes, so you have. But—now what would you think of my trying to do something of the same kind?» she burst forth, with the impetuosity of one who has decided to give utterance to a thought with which she has long been preoccupied.

Genoveva stared at her with wide-open eyes, not taking in her meaning.

«Do you not understand?»

«No, señorita.»

Maria arose, and throwing her arms around her neck, with face aflame with blushes, whispered close in her ear:—

«I mean, you silly thing, that if you would consent to do the office of those damsels of St. Isabel to-night, I for my part would imitate the saint.»

«What office?»

«Oh, you stupid, stupid thing! I mean that of giving me a few lashes, in commemoration of those that our dear Savior received, and all the saints as well, patterning themselves after him.»

«What *are* you saying, señorita? What put such a thing in your head?»

«I have thought of it because I wish to mortify my flesh, and humiliate myself, at one and the same time. That is true penance, and the kind that is most pleasing in the eyes of God, for the reason that he himself suffered it for us. I have tried to perform it unaided, but I have not been able to; and besides, it is not so effective a humiliation as receiving it from the hands of another. Now you will be so obliging as to gratify this desire of mine, won't you?»

«No, señorita, not for anything. I cannot do it.»

«Why won't you, silly thing? Don't you see that it is for my good? If I should fail to deliver myself from some days of purgatory because you would not do what I ask you, would you not be troubled with remorse?»

«But, my heart's dove, how could I make up my mind to maltreat you, even if it were for your soul's good?»

«There is no way for you to get out of it: it is a vow I have made, and I must fulfill it. You have aided me till now on my way to virtue: do not abandon me at the most critical moment. You will not, Genoveva dear; say you will not.»

«For God's sake, señorita, do not make me do this!»

«Do, do, dearest Genoveva, I beg of you by the love that you bear me.»

«No, no, do not ask it of me: I cannot.»

«Please do, darling! Oh, grant me this favor. You don't know how I shall feel if you don't; I shall think that you have ceased to love me.»

Maria exhausted all her resources of invention and coaxing to persuade her. Seating herself on Genoveva's lap, she lavished upon her caresses and words of affection; at one moment vexed, at another imploring, and all the time fixing upon her a pair of wheedling eyes, which it seemed impossible to resist. She was like a child begging for a toy that is kept back from her. When she saw that her serving-maid was a little softened, —or rather was fatigued with persistent refusing,—she said with a taking volubility:—

«Now, truly, stupid, don't you go and make it a thing of such great importance. It isn't half as bad as a bad toothache, and you know I've suffered from that pretty often. Your imagination makes you think it is something terrible, when really it is scarcely worth mentioning. You think so just because it isn't the custom now, for true piety seems banished from the world; but in the good old religious days it was a most ordinary and commonplace affair,—no one who pretended to be a good Christian neglected to do this kind of penance. Come now, get ready to give me this pleasure that I ask of you, and at the same time to perform a good work. Wait a minute: I'll bring what we want."

And running to the bureau, she pulled out of a drawer a scourge,—a veritable scourge, with a turned-wood handle and leathern thongs. Then, all in a tremor of excitement and nervousness, that set her cheeks ablaze, she returned to Genoveva and put it in her hand. The maid took it in an automatic way, scarce knowing what she did. She was completely dazed. The fair young girl began anew to caress her, and give her heart with persuasive words, to which she did not answer a syllable. Then the Señorita de Elorza, with tremulous hand, began to let loose the dainty blue-silk wrapper she wore. There shone on her face the anxious, excited foretaste of joy in the caprice which was about to be gratified. Her eyes glowed with an unwonted light, showing within their depths the expectation of vivid and mysterious pleasures. Her lips were as dry as those of one parched with thirst. The circle of shadow around her eyes had increased, and two hectic spots of crimson burned in her cheeks. Her breath came with agitated tremor through her nostrils, more widely dilated than was usual. Her white, patrician hands, with their taper fingers and rosy nails, loosed with strange speed the fastenings of her gown. With a quick movement she shook it off, and stood free.

"You shall see that I mean it," she said: "I have almost nothing on. I had prepared myself already."

In truth the next moment she took off, or rather tore off, a skirt, and remained only in her chemise.

She stood so an instant; cast a glance at the implement of torture in Genoveva's hand; and over her body ran a little shiver, compounded of cold, pleasure, anguish, affright, and anxious expectation, all in one. In a low voice, changed from its usual tones by emotion, she appealed:—

"Papa must not know of this."

And the light stuff of the chemise slipped down along her body, caught for an instant on the hips, then sank slowly to the floor. She remained nude. Genoveva contemplated her with eyes that could not withhold admiration as well as reverence, and the girl felt herself a little abashed.

« You are not going to be angry with me, Genoveva dear, are you ? »

The waiting-maid could only say, « For God's sake, señorita! »

« The sooner the better, now, for I shall take cold. »

By this consideration she wished to constrain the woman still more forcibly to the task. With a feverish movement she snatched the scourge from her left hand and put it in her right; then throwing her arms again around her neck, and kissing her, she said, very low and affecting a jocose tone:—

« You are to lay it on hard, Genovita; for thus I have promised God that it should be done. »

A violent trembling possessed her body as she uttered these words: but it was a delicious kind of trembling that penetrated to the very marrow of her bones. Then taking Genoveva by the hand, she pulled her along a little towards the table on which stood the effigy of the Savior.

« It must be here, on my knees before our Lord. »

Her voice choked up in her throat. She was pale. She bowed humbly before the image; made the sign of the cross rapidly; crossed her hands over her virginal breast; and turning her face, sweetly smiling, towards her maid, said, « Now you can begin. »

« Señorita, for God's sake! » once more exclaimed Genoveva, overwhelmed with confusion.

From the eyes of the señorita flashed a gleam of anger, which died away on the instant; but she said in a tone of some slight irritation, « Have we agreed upon this or not ? Obey me, and do not be obstinate. »

The maid, dominated by authority, and convinced too that she was furthering a work of piety, now at length obeyed, and began to ply the scourge, but very gently, on the naked shoulders of her young mistress. . . .

The first blows were so soft and inoffensive that they left no trace at all on that precious skin. Maria grew irritable, and demanded that they be more forcibly given.

« No, not like that; harder! harder!» she insisted. « But first wait a moment till I take off this jewelry: it is ridiculous at such a time.»

And she swiftly pulled off the rings from her fingers, snatched the pendants from her ears, and then laid the handful of gold and gems at the foot of the effigy of Jesus. In like manner St. Isabel, when she went to pray in the church, was used to deposit her ducal coronet on the altar.

She resumed the same humble posture; and Genoveva, seeing that there was no escape, began to lacerate the flesh of her pious mistress without mercy. The lamplight shed a soft radiance throughout the room. The gems lying at the feet of the Savior alone caught it sharply, and flung out a play of subtle gleams and scintillations. The silence at that hour was absolute; not even the sighing of a breath of wind in the casements was heard. An atmosphere of mystery and unworldly seclusion filled the room, which transported Maria out of herself, and intoxicated her with pleasure. Her lovely naked body quivered each time that the curling strokes of the lash fell upon it, with a pain not free from voluptuous delight. She laid her head against the Redeemer's feet, breathing eagerly, and with a sense of oppression; and she felt the blood beating with singular violence in her temples, while the delicate fluff of hair growing at the nape of the neck rose slightly with the magnetism of the extreme emotion that possessed her. From time to time her pale, trembling lips would murmur, « Go on! go on!»

The scourge had raised not a few stripes of roseate hue on her snowy white skin, and she did not ask for truce. But the instant came when the implement of torture drew a drop of blood. Genoveva could not contain herself longer; she threw the barbarous scourge far from her, and weeping aloud, caught the señorita in her arms, covered her with affectionate kisses, and begged her by her soul's sake never to make her recommence the perpetration of such atrocities. Maria tried to console her, assuring her that the whipping had hurt her very little. And now, her ardor a little cooled, her ascetic impulses somewhat appeased, the young mistress dismissed her servant, and went to her bedroom to retire to rest.

A FRIENDLY ARGUMENT IN THE CAFÉ DE LA MARINA

From ‹El Cuarto Poder›

When Don Melchior and his nephew entered the café, Gabino Maza, on his feet, was gesticulating actively in the midst of a little circle. He could not keep his seat two minutes at a time. His excitable temperament, and the eagerness with which he undertook to convince his audience, brought it about that he would continually spring from his seat and dash into the middle of the floor; and there he would shout and swing his arms about till he had to stop for very want of strength and breath. The subject of discussion was the opera company, which had announced its approaching departure on account of having lost money, in its subscription season of thirty performances. Maza was arguing that the company had met with no such losses, but that on the contrary the whole thing was a pretext and a trick.

«I deny it, I deny it,» he vociferated. «Anybody who says they have lost a farthing is a liar.— How are you, Gonzalo?» to the younger man of the new arrivals: «how's your health? I heard yesterday you were back. You're looking first-rate.— He's a *liar*,» he resumed, at the same pitch of violence. «I repeat it, and I wager none of them would have the face to come to *me* with that yarn.»

«According to the figures the baritone showed me, they have lost thirty thousand reals [$1,500] in the thirty performances,» said his friend Don Mateo.

Maza all but ground his teeth; indignation scarcely let him speak.

«And you attach any credit to what that toper says, Don Mateo?» he managed to get out. «Come, see here now,»— with affected scorn,— «by dint of associating with actors, you'll be forgetting your own occupation soon, like the smith they tell about in the story.»

«Listen, you madcap: I have not said I believed him, have I? All I say is that that is the way it figures out, from what the baritone told me.»

Maza, who had approached quite near, now sprang violently backward again, took up a position anew in the middle of the room, snatched off his hat, and holding it in both hands to gesticulate with, vociferated frantically:—

«Stop there! stop there! don't go a step further. Do they take us for a lot of simple fledgelings just out of the nest? Now listen to me. Just tell me what they have done with the twenty thousand and odd reals the subscription brought them, and the nearly equal amount they must have taken in at the box office.»

«Well, for one thing, they have to pay very high salaries.»

«Don't be a donkey, Álvaro; for the Holy Virgin's sake, try and not be a donkey. I'll tell you exactly what salaries they pay. The tenor»—checking off on his fingers—«six dollars a day; the soprano six more,—that makes twelve; the bass, four—sixteen; the contralto, three—nineteen; the baritone, four—»

«The baritone, five,» corrected Peña.

«The baritone, four,» insisted Maza with fury.

«I am certain it is five.»

«The baritone, four,» shouted Maza anew.

Upon this, Álvaro Peña arose in his turn, raising his voice too, and, burning with a noble desire for victory, undertook to convince or shout down his opponent. There began a wild, deafening dispute, which lasted about an hour, in which all or nearly all the members of that illustrious band of the regular frequenters of the café took part. It bore a close resemblance to the famous discussions of the Greeks without the walls of Troy; there were the same sound and fury, the same primitive simplicity in the arguments, the same undisguised and barbaric directness in the statements and the epithets employed. Such choice examples as this, for instance:—

«Could any man be more of an ass?»—«Shut up, shut up, you blockhead!»—«The ox opened his mouth, and what he said was, '*moo-o.*'»—«I tell you, you are not within a mile of the truth; or if you want to hear it plainer, you lie.»—«Great heavens, what a goose-hissing!»—«Any one would think you were a cackling old woman.»

Such altercations were of frequent, almost daily, occurrence in that room of the café. As everybody taking part in them had a direct, entirely primitive way of treating questions, like to or identical with that of the heroes of Homer, the very positions laid down at the beginning of the dispute always continued unchanged to the end. Such or such a man would go through the entire hour reiterating without pause, «No one has any right to interfere in the private life of others;» another would cry, «That might happen in Germany, if you please, but *here* we are in Spain.» A third was yet more brief, and would vociferate whenever he got the least opening, and whether he got it or not, «Moonshine! moonshine! stuff and nonsense!» Thus he would cry till he dropped half lifeless on a divan.

These arguments gained in intensity what they lost in breadth; the statements were each time repeated with greater and more devastating energy, and more strident voices, so that the day was rare that some of the speakers did not depart from there with his throat in such a state of hoarseness that he could scarcely be heard. It was generally Álvaro Peña and Don Feliciano who were found in that condition,—not because they really talked the most, but because they had the weakest vocal organs. If the Town Council had directed the planting of trees on the Riego Promenade—heated discussion in the café. If a trusted employee of the house of Gonzalez & Sons had decamped with fourteen thousand reals—discussion at the café. If the parish priest refused to give the pilot Velasco a certificate of good moral character—discussion at the café. Álvaro Peña took such a lively part in this one that he burst a small blood-vessel.

No unpleasant feelings were ever left after them, nor was it on record that any of them had ever resulted in a fight or a duel. All seemed to have tacitly agreed to accept, as they bestowed, abusive epithets as above mentioned, and take no offense at them.

VENTURITA WINS AWAY HER SISTER'S LOVER

From ‹El Cuarto Poder›

Gonzalo, after a little chat with his betrothed, arose, took a few turns up and down the long room, and went and sat down beside Venturita. The young girl was drawing some letters for embroidering.

«Don't make fun of them, Gonzalo: you know I draw badly,» said she, her eyes flashing at him a brilliant, archly provoking glance that made him lower his own.

«I do not admit that: you do not draw badly at all,» he responded, in a low voice that was slightly tremulous.

«How polite! You will admit that my drawing might be better, at any rate.»

«Better? better?—everything in this world might be better. It is very good, I assure you.»

«What a flatterer you're getting to be. But I won't have you laughing at me, do you hear? You need not try it.»

«I am not in the habit of laughing at folks—least of all at you.» He did not raise his eyes from the drawing-paper in her lap, and his voice was yet lower and more unsteady.

Venturita's bewitching glance dwelt steadily upon him, and there might be read in it the sense of triumph and gratified pride.

«Here, you draw the letters yourself, Mr. Engineer,» she said reaching the paper and pencil towards him with a charmingly despotic manner.

The young man took them; lifted his gaze for an instant to hers, but dropped it again, as if he feared an electric shock; and began to draw. But instead of ornamental letters, it was a woman's likeness that he depicted. First the hair ending in two braids down her back, then the low charming forehead, then a dainty nose, then a little mouth, then the admirably modeled chin melting into the neck with soft and graceful curves. It grew prodigiously like Venturita. While the girl, leaning close up against the shoulder of her future brother-in-law, followed the movements of the pencil, a smile of gratified vanity spread little by little over her face. . . . When the portrait was finished, she said in a roguish way, «Now put underneath it whom it is meant to represent.»

The draughtsman now raised his head, and the smiling glances of the two met, as if with a shower of sparks. Then with a swift, decisive movement, he wrote below the sketch:—

«WHAT I LOVE DEAREST IN ALL THE WORLD»

Venturita took possession of the piece of paper, and gazed at it a little while with delight; but next, feigning a disdainful mien, she thrust it back towards him, saying, «Here, take it, take it, humbug. I don't want it.»

But before it could reach the hand of Gonzalo, his intended playfully reached out hers and intercepted it, saying, «What mysterious papers are these?»

Venturita, as if she had been pricked with a sharp weapon, sprang from her chair and forcibly grasped her sister's wrist.

« Give it to me, Cecilia! give it back! let it go,» she exclaimed; her countenance darting fire, though she tried to impose upon it a forced smile.

[The amiable Cecilia yields it up. Venturita tears it in pieces. All are astonished at her violence. Her mother orders her from the room, and laments the waywardness of this younger daughter. Somewhat later Gonzalo, sad and downcast, is about to leave the house. As he extends his hand to the door, he notes that the cord that draws the latch is gently agitated from above.]

He stood a moment immovable. Again he reached towards the latch, and again the mysterious motion from above was repeated. He went back and glanced up the staircase: from the top landing a pretty blonde head smiled down at him.

« Do you want me to go up?» he asked.

« No,» she replied, but with an intonation that clearly meant, « yes.»

He immediately mounted the stairs on tiptoe.

« We can't stay here,» said Venturita: « they may see us. Come along with me.» And taking him by the hand, she led him through the corridors to the dining-room.

Gonzalo dropped into a chair, but without loosing her hand.

« Why has my mother got to mortify me at every instant, and before company?» she exclaimed. « If she thinks I will stand it she is very much mistaken. There is no consideration in this house except for that scapegrace brother of mine.»

« Sweetheart, sweetheart, don't fly out at me. *I* like you precisely because you have a will and a temper of your own. I have no fancy for women made of flour and water.»

« I guess it's because you are one of that stuff yourself.»

« Not so much as you may think.»

« I can never imagine your getting angry with anybody.»

« Oh, very well; if I am of that sort then it is very proper that I should like amiable and tranquil women.»

« Not at all, not at all,» she exclaimed, suddenly changing her ground. « The blonde complexion likes the brunette, the fat the thin, and the tall the short. Confess now, isn't it because I am so little, and you so tall, that I please you?»

« Yes, but by no means for that alone,» he said, laughing and pulling her nearer to him.

«For what else?» with one of her siren looks.

«Because you are so—homely.»

«Thanks,» she replied, her whole fair countenance illuminated with vanity.

«I suppose there is not a homelier one than you in Sarrió, or in the entire world.»

«Still, you must have seen some homelier than I in your travels abroad? The Virgin save us! what a monster of ugliness I must be.» And she laughed with all her heart at the flattery contained in his reversed hyperboles.

«We are not—comfortable here,» said the young man nervously. «Some one might enter, or—even Cecilia. And what excuse could I give?»

«No matter what excuse: that is the least thing to consider. But if you are uneasy, we can go back to the drawing-room.»

«Yes, let us go.»

«Wait here an instant: I will go and see how the land lies.» But then, stopping at the door with a new idea that just entered her head, she turned back and said, «If you would promise to be very proper and formal, I would take you to my room.»

«Word of honor,» he promised eagerly.

«No attempted kissing, you know, or silly nonsense of any kind.»

«Not a bit.»

«You swear it?»

«I do.»

«Then stay here a little, and come up after me on the tips of your toes. Good-by for about two minutes.»

He took her hand at this brief parting, and kissed it.

«There, you see, you break your promise even before we begin,» she complained, affecting displeasure.

«But I didn't think that hands counted.»

«*Everything* counts,» she retorted severely, but her eyes still smiled at him.

[The young girl's room is described,—a marvel of daintiness, luxury, and good taste, personal to herself. Gonzalo exclaims:—]

«Oh, how much better this is than Cecilia's room!»

«You have seen hers?»

"Yes: a few days ago she showed it to me, with its bare walls, poor pictures, bed without draperies, and most commonplace bureau."

"Be good enough to sit down: you have grown tall enough."

"You did wrong to let me come up here," he said.

"Why? what do you mean?" and she affected surprise, opening and shutting her bright eyes many times in succession, so that the effect was like that play of heat-lightning that is observed in the warm evenings of summer.

"Because I feel that I am ill."

"You are ill? truly?" And now she opened her blue eyes widely; without, for all that, succeeding in giving them an innocent look.

"Yes, that is—yes, a little."

"Do you want me to call assistance?"

"That would do no good, as it is your eyes that are making all the trouble."

"Oh, then I will shut them up," she said, laughing merrily.

"Don't shut them up, don't shut them up, I beg of you. If you do, I shall be infinitely worse."

"I see it is best, in that case, that I should go away."

"And that would simply be to have my death at your door. Do you know why I think I am taken so ill? Because, I suppose, I cannot kiss down the lovely eyelids above those eyes that stab me through the heart."

"Oh, indeed? how badly off you are!" she rejoined, mocking him with the gayest laughter. "Well, I am sorry I cannot cure you."

"Then you will allow me to die?"

"Certainly, if you wish to."

"But you will first let me imprint a kiss upon your delightful hair, at least?"

"No indeed."

"Your hands, then?"

"No, not my hands either."

"Nothing of your belongings? Oh, see how you make me suffer, what fatal harm you are doing me."

"Here is a glove you may kiss, if you want to," and she tossed him one of her own that lay upon the dressing-table.

He pressed it to his lips repeatedly, with glowing ardor.

Disloyal, weak, a repellent character, as the critics like to say of the personages in novels who are not monumentally heroic and gifted with all the talents. But suppose the reader himself to be placed in that position, face to face with the younger Señorita Belinchon, receiving the meteor-like glances of her blue eyes, and hearkening to a voice with both grave and honeyed inflections that moved the very fibres of the soul, and suppose she should toss him a glove of hers to kiss,— I should very much like to hear in what severe terms he would decline the honor.

« Now let us speak seriously [said Venturita]; let us talk of our situation. In spite of what you promised me three days ago, I have not heard that you have yet spoken with mama or papa, or even written to them. Quite the contrary, in fact: not only you let the time pass, while every day makes things worse, but you seem to show yourself even more devoted to Cecilia than before.»

Gonzalo denied this with a shake of the head.

« But I have seen you. If you do not love her, this conduct towards her is very bad; and if you do love her, then your conduct towards me is infamous.»

«Are you not yet sure that my heart is yours alone?» he asked, his impassioned glance fixed upon her face.

« No.»

« Yes, yes, yes, it is; a thousand times yes. But I cannot be in Cecilia's company and be harsh and indifferent with her. That would be too dreadful. I would rather tell her what has happened and have done with it, once for all.»

« Tell her, then.»

« I dare not.»

« Very well, *don't* tell her, then. You and I will break off all that is between us. It will be better so, anyway,» said his fair young companion tartly.

« For God's sake, Venturita, don't say that; don't talk that way. You frighten me; you will make me think you don't love me. You must understand that my position in all this is strange, compromising, terrible. On the very point of marrying a most estimable girl, without any fault on her part, without any falling-out to serve as a pretext, or any circumstance whatever to forewarn her of such a thing, I am suddenly to say to her, ‹All is over between us, because I do not love you, and never have loved you.› Could any conduct be more brutal and odious?

And your parents,—how are they going to take my conduct? Most likely, after indignantly scoring me as I shall deserve, they will order me out of their house, and never let me set foot in it again.»

« Very good, very good: then marry her, I say,—and I wish you joy of her,» said Venturita, springing up very pale.

« Never! that will never be. I shall either marry you or nobody else in all the wide world.»

« Then what are we going to do?»

« Oh, I don't know, I don't know;» his head drooping in abject sadness.

A silence fell upon them for a moment, broken by Venturita, who said, tapping lightly on his bowed head, « Rack your brains, man; invent something.»

« I'm trying and trying, but nothing comes of it.»

« You are good for nothing. Come, you must go now. Leave the thing to my charge. I will speak to mama. But you must write a letter to Cecilia.»

« Oh, for heaven's sake, Venturita!» he protested in anguish of soul.

« Then don't do it, and—what is the next step on the programme, tell: do you think I am going to serve as a plaything for you?»

« If I could only dispense with writing such a letter,» he responded, cringing with humility. « You cannot imagine what violence it does to my whole nature. Would it not do, instead, if I should cease coming to the house for some days?»

« Yes, yes, it would. Off with you now, and don't come back,» said the girl, herself moving towards the door to depart. But he restrained her, by one of her braids of hair.

« Don't be offended with me, my beautiful one,» he entreated. « Well you know that you have enchanted me, that you tread me under the sole of your pretty foot. In the long run I shall do whatever you want me to, even to jumping into the sea if you desire it. I was only trying to spare Cecilia suffering.»

« Conceited fellow! I'll wager now you think Cecilia will die of love for you.»

« If she gives herself no great concern, so much the better; I shall thus escape enduring remorse.»

« Cecilia is cold; she neither loves nor hates with any warmth of feeling. Her disposition is excellent; selfishness has no part in it; you would find her always exactly the same,— that is, neither gay nor sad. She is apathetic, incapable of being wounded by any disappointment,— at least, if she is, she never shows it. What are you doing there?—» she broke off, rapidly whirling around to face him.

«I was trying to unbraid your hair. I wanted to see it loose, as you let me see it once before. There is not a more beautiful sight in the world.»

«I don't know that I object, if it is your whim to see it,» replied the maiden,— who was proud, and with reason, of her wealth of shining hair.

«What loveliness! it is one of the wonders of the world.» He touched the flowing locks gently; weighed them in his hands with delight; then, taken with a sudden enthusiasm, he cried, «I must bathe in them; let me bathe in this river of molten gold.»

[At this moment one of the sewing-girls, sent after some patterns, chanced to enter the room. Gonzalo looked up, paler than wax; the servant colored violently with confusion. Venturita alone kept her calmness. First managing to make her finger bleed by an adroit blow against the wardrobe, she said coolly:—]

«O Valentina, won't you do me the favor to tie up my hair. I cannot do it myself, on account of having hurt my finger» (showing it). «Don Gonzalo was just going to try, but he would make very awkward work of it.»

JUAN VALERA

(1827–)

BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

JUAN VALERA was born in 1827, at Cabra, a village of the Department of Cordova. He has identified himself greatly with his delightful native district of Andalusia, in the scenes of his novels; but personally he has led for the most part a life far from rural scenes,—a life of great capitals, long residence in foreign lands, active political as well as literary movements, and high honors and emoluments. It is a kind of life calculated to sharpen the natural intelligence, and confer ease and distinction of manners. His friend and admirer, Cánovas del Castillo, the late premier of Spain, accordingly said of him, as bearing upon the accuracy of his descriptions of social matters: «Mas hombre de mundo que Valera no le hay en España» (More man of the world than Valera there is not one in Spain). His father was a rear admiral, his mother the noble Marchioness Paniega. He was educated at two religious schools,—one at Malaga, the other on the Sacro Monte at Grenada, the same quarter that still contains the gipsies in their rock-cut dwellings. He very early entered upon the career of diplomacy. He was secretary of legation successively at Naples, Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro, Dresden, and St. Petersburg; and later has been Spanish minister to the United States and some other countries. He has also been at various times deputy to the Cortes, high official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, Director of Public Instruction, and is now a life senator and a member of the Council of State. He was one of the eight eminent Spaniards commissioned by the nation to go and offer the crown to Prince Amadeo of Italy, after the overthrow of Isabel II. in 1868. As a political writer, he collaborated with the group of talented men, under José Luis de Albareda, who conducted El Contemporáneo (The Contemporary), a liberal review which overturned the ministry of Marshal O'Donnell. The same Albareda, later, founded La Revista de España (The Spanish Review), in which a good deal of Valera's work has appeared.

Valera has been also a professor of foreign literatures, and he is a member of the Spanish Academy. He has attempted many varieties of literary work, and been eminent in all. It might fairly be assumed from his smooth, harmonious, polished style, that he had written verses; and such is the case. Of his collected ‘Poems’ (1856), ‘El Fuego Divino’ (The Fire Divine) is esteemed as among the best; a composition of thoroughly modern touch, yet in the vein of the mystical Fray Luis de Leon of the sixteenth century. His poetry comprises many paraphrases or translations from the Portuguese, the German, and the English,—excellent renderings of Whittier, Lowell, and W. W. Story, being found among the last. He is above all things a scholar and a critical essayist; a considerable number of his published volumes consist of collected essays or discourses before the Spanish Academy, covering such subjects as ‘The Women Writers of Spain,’ ‘St. Teresa,’ and the like,—not the moderns; ‘Studies of the Middle Ages’; ‘Liberty in Art’; and ‘The New Art of Writing Novels,’—largely a discussion of French Naturalism. ‘Cartas Americanas’ (American Letters) is a small volume, with a kindly touch, devoted to an inquiry into the merits of the current literature of the Spanish Americas.

All that he does is characterized by scholarship and a rich culture. He himself confesses that he wrote his first novel, ‘Pepita Ximenez,’ 1874, without knowing that it was a novel. In fiction, his achievement is summed up in the having produced this one really great book, universally admired, ‘Pepita Ximenez,’ and a number of others of far inferior merit. He holds that the object of a novel should be the faithful representation of human actions and passions, and the creation, through such fidelity to nature, of a beautiful work; and he considers it a debasement of a work of art to attempt, for instance, to prove theses by it, or to reduce it to any strictly utilitarian end. ‘Pepita’ is a novel of «character,» not of action. It has been complained that there is almost as great a lack of adventure in some of our modern fiction as there was a superabundance of it in the older sort; but no intelligent mind can fail to be carried along with the development of this most impressive and charming moral drama, slow, contemplative, and philosophic though the stages be by which it seems to move. How thoroughly, how exhaustively, are the situation and the problems of character worked out! This completeness and steadiness of attention are a very modern trait in fiction, as contrasted with the old picaresque stories, otherwise equally natural, upon which it is based. In that day, the scene, the personages, had to be continually changed, as for an audience that could not keep its mind fixed upon anything more than a few minutes at a time. In ‘Gil Blas,’ the robber cavern alone was material enough for a full volume; yet there it was but an episode, quickly giving place to an interminable succession of others.

In ‘Pepita Ximenez,’ Valera is fortunate enough to have an almost elemental passion to treat,—a subject like some of those of Shakespeare: the moral crisis of a young ecclesiastic, torn between earthly and heavenly love. Don Luis, the son of a worldly father, comes home to the family estate in Andalusia for a short vacation, preparatory to taking orders. A handsome, well-built young man, he has been devoutly reared by his uncle, the dean of a cathedral in a distant town; and his head is full of the sincerest dreams of religious self-sacrifice, of exile, and even perchance martyrdom, in the Orient. His father wishes him, rather, to marry and inherit his wealth. It is not quite clear just what part of the final result is due to the affectionate machinations of those nearest him in his family, and what to unaided nature and the delightful fascinations of Pepita. She is a very young widow, of but eighteen, the widow of a rich old man who had been very kind to her. It is springtime in flowery Andalusia; and Pepita's discretion and reserve of character, her high-bred charm, her beauty, soon take hold upon Don Luis. The story is told chiefly in his letters to the dean. «The worst of it is,» he writes, «that with the life I am leading I fear I may become too worldly minded.» Soon it is: «He that loves the danger shall perish in it;» and finally an agony of appeal: «Oh, save me! Oh, take me away from here, or I am forever lost.» What was Pepita's part in it? Was she in some sense the ally of his father,—who gave out that he wanted to marry her himself,—or did she love the handsome young theological student from the first? She loves him madly at last; and it is due to her own quite desperate persistence in the end that he is lost to the Church, and gained to secular life.

The author has not the gift of facile conversation: his characters rather dissertate to one another than talk. They incline to discuss at great length abstract questions of morals, theology, or taste; the pretty women only refrain from this at the cost of not talking at all. Even at the supreme moment of their probable parting forever, Luis and Pepita speak set orations. Still these orations are full of thought and have an innate interest.

In ‹Doña Luz› (1878) we have again the same beautiful, high-bred kind of a woman as Pepita. She is «like a sun at its zenith.» As she passes in the street, the bystanders murmur with the exaggerated Andalusian gallantry, «There goes the living glory itself.» And again there is an interesting young priest; but all passes platonically. Doña Luz marries a brilliant man of the world, but he has sought her only for her fortune; she lives apart from him, and finds solace in her child.

‹Las Ilusiones del Doctor Faustino› (The Illusions of Doctor Faustus: 1876) is the most ambitious of Valera's novels, but not correspondingly successful. It is a reminiscence of Faust; undertaking to show in the career of the poor and haughty young patrician, Mendoza, the many changes of purpose, belief, and fortune, the philosophic doubts and baffled aspirations, that may attend the life of man on earth. His own mother asks, «*Para que sirve?*» (Of what use is he?) An apparition who calls herself his «Immortal Friend» flits across his career from time to time; he falls among bandits; he has many love affairs in which he does not appear to advantage; and he finally commits suicide. ‹Pasarse de Listo› (Overshot the Mark), 1878, is an account of Inesita and the young Count de Alhedin, who, with excessive circumspection, manage to involve in the appearance of the flirtation they two are really carrying on, Beatriz the married sister of the young girl; with the tragic result that the husband of Beatriz is led to jump off the Segovia Street Viaduct at Madrid, and kill himself. This book has been translated by Clara Bell, under the title of ‹Don Braulio.›

‹El Commendador Mendoza› (Commander Mendoza), 1877, is a story of the last century, though nothing archaic in its form would distinguish the time from the present day. The Commander, come back with a fortune from Peru to his native village, finds there an old flame of his from Lima, Doña Blanca; and her daughter Clara, who is also his daughter. Doña Blanca, rigidly repentant and devout, desires that Clara should enter a convent, that she may not by marrying divert the wealth of her putative father into an illegitimate channel. The Commander performs prodigies of ingenuity and generosity to save the amiable Clara; and by stripping himself entirely of his property, gets her happily married to the man of her choice, without the public ever being cognizant of their secret. He is rewarded by securing for himself the hand of Lucia, a charming young friend of his daughter's. She is represented as much preferring an elderly to a youthful lover; and such a lover is celebrated in a poem in which it is said that « The spirit burns undimmed beneath the snow with which the persistent labor of the mind has crowned his brow.» Other books are ‹Currita Albornoz,› 1890; ‹La Buena Fama› (Good Name), 1894; ‹El Hechicero› (The Sorcerer), 1895; and ‹Juanita la Larga› (Tall Juanita), 1895. ‹Tall Juanita,› the latest, is the history of the true affection which a man of fifty-three succeeds in inspiring in a young peasant girl of seventeen. A scapegrace character in it goes to Cuba. It is represented that he proposes to take part in filibustering schemes, then become an American citizen, get a large claim for damages allowed against Spain, give four fifths to the legislators who have assisted him, and with the other fifth live in luxury on Fifth Avenue, New York. This is very far indeed from the idyllic charm of ‹Pepita Ximenez.›

William Henry Bishop

The following translations are from the original Spanish, by William Henry Bishop, for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›

YOUTH AND CRABBED AGE

From ‹Pepita Ximenez›

When Don Gumersindo was close upon his eightieth year, Pepita Ximenez was only about to complete her sixteenth. He was rich and influential in the community, she was without means or the support of powerful friends.

Indeed, from the ethical point of view, this marriage is open to question. Still, so far as the young girl is concerned, if we recollect the entreaties, the querulous complaints, nay, even the positive commands, of her mother; if we take into account that she designed by this step to secure for her mother a comfortable old age, and to save her brother from disgrace and even infamy, acting in this affair as his guardian angel and earthly providence,— then it must be confessed that there is room for an abatement of the censure — if censure be the feeling aroused in the spectator's mind. Furthermore, who is to penetrate into the intimate recesses, the hidden depths of heart and mind, of a tender maiden, brought up most likely in extreme seclusion, and wholly ignorant of the world? who is to know what ideas she may have formed to herself of matrimony? Perchance — who knows? — she may have thought that to marry that venerable man was merely to devote her life to taking care of him; to be his nurse; to sweeten with her presence his last days; to rescue him from solitude and abandonment, where in his infirmities he would have had no aid but from mercenary hands: in a word, like an angel that takes on human form, to cheer and illumine his decline of life with the winsome and mellow glow emanating from her youth and beauty. If the girl thought somewhat of this or all of this, and in the innocence of her heart never dreamed of going on into any further aspects of the case, then indeed is her act not only free from blame, but must claim admiration as showing the warm benevolence of her nature.

However this may be, and now putting aside this line of psychological examination,— which I really have no right to attempt, since I possess no personal acquaintance with Pepita Ximenez,— what remains certain is, that she lived in an edifying state of harmony with the old man for three years; that her venerable partner appeared happier than he had ever been in all his days; that she nursed him and entertained him with an admirable conscientiousness; and that in his last painful illness she waited upon him and watched over him with the tenderest and most unwearied affection,—till at length he died in her arms, and left her heiress to a large fortune.

PEPITA'S APPEARANCE AT THE GARDEN PARTY

From ‹Pepita Ximenez›

Pepita Ximenez, who, through my father, had heard of the great pleasure I take in the gardens of this district, has invited us to visit one that she owns at a short distance from the village, and to eat the early strawberries that grow there. This liking of Pepita's to show herself so gracious to my father, who is a suitor for her hand, while at the same time in that capacity she will have none of him, often seems to me to savor not a little of a coquetry worthy of reprobation. But when on the next occasion I see her so natural, so perfectly frank and simple, the injurious fancy passes; and I feel that she must do everything with the most limpid purity of mind, and that she has no other purpose than to preserve the friendly feeling that unites our family to hers.

Be that as it will, the day before yesterday we paid the visit to Pepita's garden. . . . By quite a sybaritic piece of refinement, it was not the gardener, nor was it his wife, nor his son, nor indeed any other person of the rustic sort, who waited upon us at the luncheon; it was two pretty girls, confidential servants as it were of Pepita, dressed in the usual peasant costume, yet with consummate neatness and elegance. Their gowns were of a bright-colored cotton stuff, short in the skirt, and trimly fitted to their figures; they wore silk handkerchiefs crossed over their shoulders, and in the abundant black tresses of each one . . . showed a fresh sprig of roses.

Pepita's gown, except that it was of rich quality, was equally unpretentious. It was of black wool, and cut in the same form as those of the maids; without being too short, its wearer had taken care that it should not trail, nor in slouchy fashion sweep up the dust of the ground. A modest silk handkerchief, black also, covered her shoulders and bosom after the fashion of the country; and on her head she wore neither ribbon, flower, nor gem, nor any other adornment than that of her own beautiful blonde hair. The only detail in Pepita's appearance in which I noticed that she departed from the custom of the country people, and showed a certain fastidiousness, was her concern to wear gloves. It is apparent that she takes great care of her hands, and prides herself with some little vanity on keeping them white and pretty, and the nails polished and of roseate hue. But if she has so much of vanity, it is to be pardoned to human weakness: and indeed, if I recollect aright, even St. Theresa in her youth had it also; which did not hinder her from becoming the very great saint she was.

In fact I quite understand, though I do not undertake to defend, that particular bit of vanity. It is so distinguished, so high-bred, to have a comely hand; I even frequently think it has something symbolical about it. The hand is the minister of our actions; the sign of our innate gentility; the medium through which the intelligence vests with form the inventions of its artistic sense, gives being to the creations of its will, and exercises the sovereignty that God conceded to man over all created things.

A NOONDAY APPARITION IN THE GLEN

From ‹Pepita Ximenez›

My father, wishing to pay off to Pepita the compliment of her garden party, invited her in her turn to make a visit to our country-house of the Pozo de la Solana. . . . We had to go in the saddle. As I have never learned to ride horseback, I mounted, as on all the former excursions with my father, a mule which Dientes, our mule-driver, pronounced twice as good as gold, and as steady as a hay-wagon. . . . Now Pepita Ximenez, whom I supposed I should see in side-saddle on an animal of the donkey species also,—what must she do but astonish me by appearing on a fine horse of piebald marking, and full of life and fire. It did not take me long to see the sorry figure I should cut, jogging along in the rear with fat Aunt Casilda and the vicar, and to be mortified by it. When we reached the villa and dismounted, I felt relieved of as great a load as if it was I that had carried the mule, and not the mule that had carried me. . . .

Bordering the course of the brook, and especially in the ravines, are numerous poplars with other well-grown trees, which in conjunction with the shrubbery and taller herbs, form dusky and labyrinthine thickets. A thousand fragrant sylvan growths spring up spontaneously there; and in truth it is difficult to imagine anything wilder, more secluded, more completely solitary, peaceful, and silent, than that spot. In the blaze of noonday, when the sun is pouring down his light in floods from a sky without a cloud, and in the calm warm hours of the afternoon siesta, almost the same mysterious terrors steal upon the mind as in the still watches of the night. One comprehends there the way of life of the ancient patriarchs, and of the heroes and shepherds of primitive tradition, with all the apparitions and visions they were wont to have,—now of nymphs, now of gods, and now of angels, in the midst of the brightness of day.

In the passage through those dusky thickets, it came about at a given moment, I know not how, that Pepita and I found ourselves side by side and alone. All the others had remained behind.

I felt a sudden thrill run over all my body. It was the very first time I had ever been alone with that woman; the place was extremely solitary, and I had been thinking but now of the apparitions — sometimes sinister, sometimes winsome, but always supernatural — that used to walk at noonday in the sight of the men of an earlier time.

Pepita had put off at the house her long riding-skirt, and now wore a short one that did not hamper the graceful lightness of her natural movements. On her head she had set a charmingly becoming little Andalusian shade-hat. She carried in her hand her riding-whip; and somehow my fancy struck out the whimsical conceit that this was one of those fairy wands with which the sorceress could bewitch me at will, if she pleased.

I do not shrink from setting down on this paper deserved eulogies of her beauty. In that wild woodland scene, it seemed to me even fairer than ever. The plan that the old ascetic saints recommended to us as a safeguard,—namely, to think upon the beloved one as all disfigured by age and sickness, to picture her as dead, lapsing away in corruption, and a prey to worms,—that picture came before my imagination in spite of my will. I say «in spite of my will,» because I do not believe that any such terrible precaution is necessary. No evil thought as to the material body, no untoward suggestion of a malign spirit, at that time disturbed my reason nor made itself felt by my senses or my will.

What did occur to me was a line of reasoning, convincing at least in my own mind, that quite obviated the necessity of such a step of precaution. Beauty, the product of a divine and supreme art, may be indeed but a weak and fleeting thing, disappearing perchance in a twinkling: still the idea and essence of that beauty are eternal; once apprehended by the mind of man, it must live an immortal life. The loveliness of that woman, such as it has shown itself to me to-day, will vanish, it is true, within a few brief years; that wholly charming body, the flowing lines and contours of that exquisite form, that noble head so proudly poised above the slender neck and shoulders,—all, all will be but food for loathsome worms; but though the earthly form of matter is to change, how as to the mental conception of that frame, the artistic ideal, the essential beauty itself? Who is to destroy all that? Does it not remain in the depths of the Divine Mind? Once perceived and known by me, must it not live forever in my soul, victorious over age and even over death?

THE EVENINGS AT PEPITA'S TERTULIA

From ‹Pepita Ximenez›

As I HAVE mentioned to you before, Pepita receives her friends every evening at her house, from nine o'clock till twelve. Thither repair four or five matrons, and as many young girls of the village, counting in Aunt Casilda with the number; and then six or seven young men who play forfeits with the girls. Three or four engagements are already on the carpet from this association, which is natural enough. The graver portion of the social assembly [*tertulia*], pretty much always the same, is composed of the exalted dignitaries of the place, so to speak; that is, my father who is the squire, with the apothecary, the doctor, the notary, and his Reverence the vicar. . . .

I am never quite certain in which section of the company I ought to place myself. If it is with the young people, I fear my seriousness is a damper on their sports and their flirtation; if with the older set, then I am constrained to play the part of a mere looker-on in things I do not understand. The only games I know how to play are the simple ones of «blind donkey,» «wide-awake donkey,» and a little *tute* or *brisca cruzada.*

The best thing for me would be not to go to the *tertulia* at all. My father, however, insists that I shall go; not to do so, according to him, would be to make myself ridiculous.

My father breaks out in many expressions of wonderment at noticing my complete ignorance of certain things; such as that I cannot play ombre,—not even ombre. This strikes him simply with bewilderment.

«Your uncle has brought you up in the gleam of a twopenny rushlight,» he exclaims. «He has stuffed you with theology, and then more theology still, and left you wholly in the dark about everything that it is really important to know. From the very fact that you are to be a priest, and consequently cannot dance nor make love when you go out in society, you ought to know how to play ombre. If not, what are you going to do with yourself, you young wretch? just tell us that.»

To this and other shrewd discourse of the sort I have finally had to give in; and my father is teaching me ombre at home, so that as soon as I know it I can play it at Pepita's receptions. He has been anxious furthermore to teach me fencing, and after that to smoke, and to shoot, and to throw the bar; but I have not consented to any of these latter propositions.

«What a difference between my youthful years and yours!» my father likes to exclaim.

And then he will add, laughingly:—

«However, it's all essentially the same thing. I too had my canonical hours, but they were in the Life Guards barracks: a good cigar was our incense, a pack of cards was our hymn-book; nor was there ever lacking to us a good supply of other devotional exercises all just as spiritual as those.»

Although you, my good uncle, had forewarned me of this levity of character in my father,—and indeed it is precisely on account of it that I passed twelve years of my life with you, from the age of ten to that of twenty-two,—still my father's way of talking, sometimes free beyond all bounds, often alarms and mortifies me. But what can I do about it? At any rate, though it is not becoming in me to censure it, I shall never show approval nor laugh at it.

PEPITA'S EYES

From ‘Pepita Ximenez’

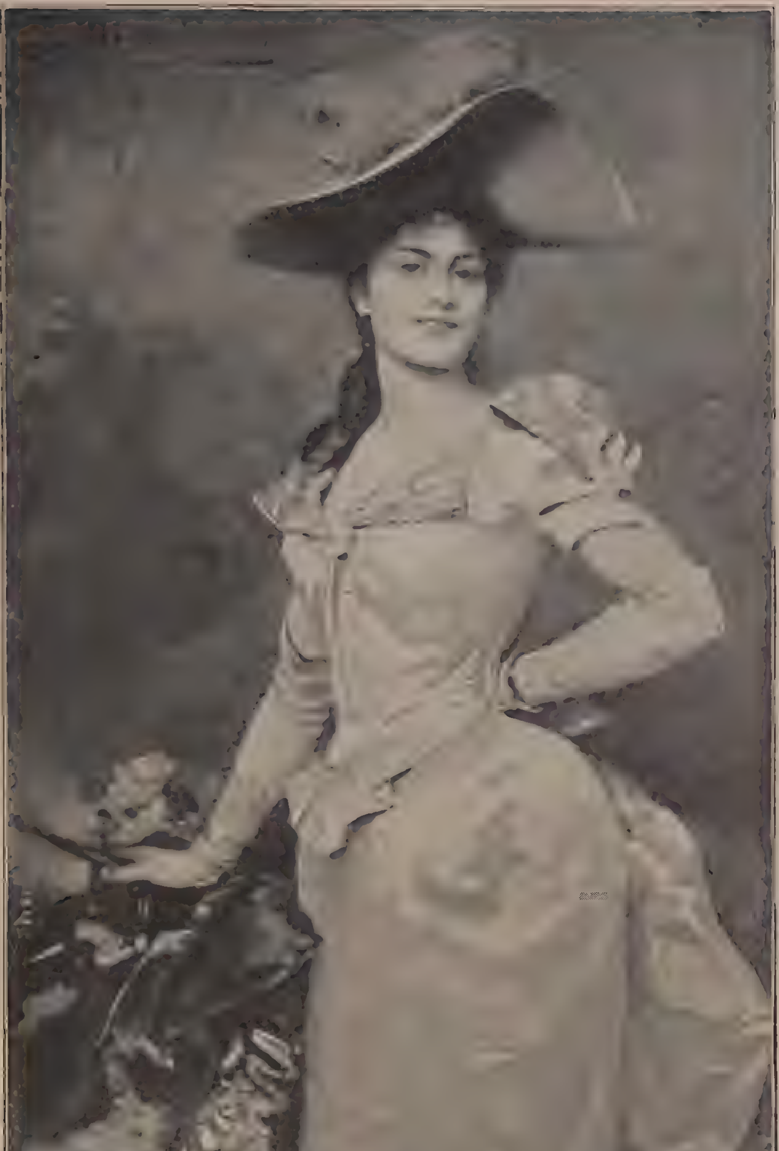
As I must have told you in former letters, Pepita's eyes, though green like those of Circe, have a most tranquil and exemplary expression. One would decide that she was not conscious of the power of her eyes at all, nor ever knew that they could serve for any other purpose than simply that of seeing with. When her gaze falls upon you, its soft light is so clear, so candid and pure, that so far from fomenting any wicked thought, it appears as if it favored only those of the most limpid kind. It leaves chaste and innocent souls in unruffled repose, and it destroys all incentive to ill in those that are not so. Nothing of ardent passion, nothing of unhallowed fire, is there in the eyes of Pepita. Like the calm mild radiance of the moon, rather, is the sweet illumination of her glance.

Well, then, I have to tell you now, in spite of all the above, that two or three times I have fancied I caught an instantaneous gleam of splendor, a lightning-like flash, a devastating leap of flame, in those fine eyes when they rested upon mine. Is this only some ridiculous bit of vanity, suggested by the arch-fiend himself? I think it must be. I wish to believe that it is, and I will believe that it is.

No, it was not a dream, it was not the figment of a mad imagination, it was but the sober truth. She does suffer her eyes to look into mine with the burning glance of which I have told you. Her eyes are endowed with a magnetic attraction impossible to explain. They draw me on, they undo me, and I cannot withhold my own from them. At those times my eyes must blaze with a baleful flame like hers. Thus did those of Amnon when he contemplated Tamar; thus did those of the Prince of Schechem when he looked upon Dinah.

When our glances meet in that way I forget even my God. Her image instead rises up in my soul, victorious over everything. Her beauty shines resplendent beyond all other beauty; the joys of heaven seem to me of less worth than her affection, and an eternity of suffering but a trifling cost for the incalculable bliss infused into my being by a single one of those glances of hers, though they pass quick as the lightning's flash.

When I return to my dwelling, when I am alone in my chamber, in the silence of the night,— then, oh then, all the horror of



"O saw ye not fair Ines?"

my situation comes upon me, and I form the best of resolutions—but only to break them again forthwith.

I promise myself to invent a pretext of sickness, or to seek some other subterfuge, no matter what, in order not to go to Pepita's house on the succeeding night; and yet I go, just as if no such resolution had been taken. . . .

Not alone to my sight is she so delectable, so grateful, but her voice also sounds in my ears like the celestial music of the spheres, revealing to me all the harmonies of the universe. I even go to the point of imagining that there emanates from her form a subtile aroma of delicious fragrance, more delicate than that of mint by the brook-sides, or than wild thyme on the mountain slopes.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE INTERESTS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

From ‹Pepita Ximenez›

Don Luis was of a stubbornly persistent, obstinate nature; he had what, when well directed, makes that desirable quality called firmness of character. Nothing abased him so much in his own eyes as to be inconsistent in his opinions or his conduct. The plan and aim of Don Luis's whole life, the plan which he had declared and defended before all those whom he associated with,—his moral ideal of himself, in fact, which was that of an aspirant to holiness, a man consecrated to God and imbued with the sublimest philosophy of religion,—all that could not fall to the ground without causing him great distress of mind; as fall it would if he let himself be carried away by his love for Pepita. Although the price to be received was an incomparably higher one, he felt that he was going to imitate the improvident Esau of Holy Writ, and sell his birthright for a mess of pottage.

We men in general are wont to be but the poor plaything of circumstances; we suffer ourselves to be borne along by the current, and do not direct ourselves unswerving to a single aim. We do not choose our own destiny, but accept and carry on that which blind fortune assigns to us. With many men the kind of occupation they follow, the political party they belong to—pretty much all the circumstances of their lives, turn upon hazards and fortuitous events; it is not plan but the whims and caprices of fortune that settle it.

The pride of Don Luis rebelled against such an order of things with an energy that was disposed to be titanic. What would be said of him — above all, what must he think of himself — if his life's ideal, if the new man whom he had created within his being, if all his praiseworthy reachings out towards virtue, honor, and holy ambition, were to vanish in an instant, consumed by the warmth of a look, a passing glance from a dark eye, as the frost liquefies in the yet feeble rays of the morning sun?

These and yet other reasons of a like egotistical sort, in addition to considerations of real merit and weight, contended against the attractions of the young widow. But all his reasoning alike put on the garb of religion; so that Don Luis himself, not able to distinguish and discriminate clearly between them, would mistake for the love of God not only that which was really love of God, but also his own self-love. He recalled, for instance, the lives of many of the saints who had resisted yet greater temptations than his own; and he would not reconcile himself to be less heroic than they. He remembered especially that notable case of firmness shown by St. John Chrysostom; who was able to remain unmoved under all the blandishments of a good and loving mother, deaf to her sobs, her most affectionate entreaties, all the eloquent and feeling pleas that she made to him not to abandon her and become a priest. She led him, for this interview, even to her own room, and made him seat himself beside the bed in which she had brought him into the world; but all in vain. After having reflected upon this, Don Luis could not endure in himself the weakness of failing to scorn the entreaties of a stranger woman, of whose very existence he had been ignorant but a short time before, and of wavering still between his duty and the allurements of that charming person; whose feeling, furthermore, for all he knew, was but coquetry, instead of real love for him.

Next, Don Luis reflected on the august dignity of the sacerdotal office to which he was called; in his thoughts he set it high above all the other institutions, above all the poor thrones and principalities of the earth; and this because it was never founded by mortal man, nor caprice of the noisy and servile crowd, nor through any invasion nor inheritance of power by barbarous rulers, nor by the violence of mutinous troops led on by greed; nor had it been founded by any angel, archangel, or any created power whatever, but by the eternal Paraclete himself. How! was he indeed yielding to the charm of a giddy girl,—to a tear or two, perhaps feigned at that,—was he for such a motive to belittle and put aside that greatest of dignities, that sacred authority which God did not concede even to the very archangels nearest his throne? Could he ever be content to descend to the common herd, to be lost among them? Could he be merely one of the flock when he had aspired to be its shepherd, tying or untying on earth what God should tie or untie in heaven, pardoning sins, regenerating souls by water and the Spirit, teaching them in the name of an infallible authority, and pronouncing judgments which the Lord would then ratify and confirm in highest heaven? . . .

When Don Luis reflected upon all this, his soul flew aloft and soared high above all the clouds into the farthest empyrean; and poor Pepita Ximenez was left behind there, far below, scarce visible, as one might say, to the naked eye.

Soon however would his winged imagination cease its flight, his spirit return to earth. Then once more he would see Pepita, so gracious, so youthful, so ingenuous, so loving; and Pepita combated within his heart his most inflexible determinations. Don Luis dreaded, with but too much reason, that in the end she would scatter them all to the winds.

HOW YOUNG DON FADRIQUE WAS PERSUADED TO DANCE

From ‘Commander Mendoza’

When a child, Don Fadrique used to dance the *bolero* very creditably. Don Diego—for such was his father's name—had pleasure in seeing the boy exhibit his grace and skill whenever he took him about to pay visits with him, or when he received visitors at his own house.

On a certain occasion Don Diego, with his son Don Fadrique, went to the little city,—I have never been willing to give any name to it,—distant about two leagues from Villabermejo, in which little city the scene of my novel ‘Pepita Ximenez’ is laid. . . .

At that time Don Fadrique was thirteen years old, but unusually tall for his age. As visits of ceremony were to be made, he had put on a crimson damask coat and waistcoat, with burnished steel buttons, together with white-silk stockings and buckled shoes,—a costume in which he was like the midday sun, for the fine and becoming effect of it.

Don Fadrique's well-worn traveling-suit, much spotted and patched, was left behind at the inn, as were their horses as well. Don Diego was of a mind that his son should appear in his company in unclouded splendor; and the boy was most self-complacent at finding himself decked out in such modish and elegant attire. This fine dress, however, inspired in him at the same time an ideal of a certain exaggerated formality and reserve of conduct, he thought he ought to observe to be in keeping with it.

Their first visit was made to a noble dame, a widow with two unmarried daughters. Unluckily here the family spoke of young Fadrique; how he was growing up, and his skill in dancing the *bolero*.

"He does not dance as well at present as he did a year ago," his father explained; "for he is just now at the awkward hobbledehoy age,—an ungainly period, between schoolmaster's rod and the first razor. You know that boys at that age are unendurable,—trying to ape the airs of grown men, when they are not men in the least. Nevertheless, as you are kind enough to desire it, he shall give you an example of his accomplishments in the dancing line."

The ladies, who had at first but politely suggested it, hereupon urged their request quite warmly. One of the young daughters of the house picked up a guitar, and began to strum suitable dance music.

"Dance, Fadrique," said Don Diego, as soon as the music struck up.

But an unconquerable repugnance to dancing upon that occasion took possession of the boy. He fancied there was a prodigious irrelevancy—a regular Antinomian heresy, as they would have said in those days—between his dance and the mature coat of ceremony he had then put on. It should be stated that he wore such a coat on this day for the first time; and this too was the very first appearance of the new costume—if indeed it can be called "new," after having been made over from a suit which had first been his father's, and then his elder brother's.

and only handed down to him when it had grown too tight and short for them.

"Dance, Fadrique," his father repeated, beginning to lose patience at his delay.

Don Diego—whose own garb, of a kind adapted both to country wear and to traveling, was presumably quite correct enough without change—had not donned a formal coat, like his son. His attire consisted of a complete suit of dressed deerskin, with long boots and spurs; and in his hand he carried the hunting-whip with which he was wont to keep in order both his spirited horse and a pack of dogs that followed him.

"Dance, Fadrique!" cried Don Diego, repeating his order for the third time. His voice had an agitated tone, due to anger and surprise.

Don Diego held so exalted an idea of the paternal authority, and of his own in particular, that he marveled at the species of taciturn rebellion at which he was assisting.

"Let him alone, I beg, Señor Mendoza," interposed the noble widow. "The child is tired out with his journey, and does not feel like dancing."

"He has *got* to dance, and at once."

"No, no, never mind," protested she who strummed the guitar. "Probably we shall have the pleasure of seeing him some other time."

"He shall dance, and on the instant, I say. Dance, I tell you, Fadrique."

"I won't dance in a coat of ceremony like this," the youth at last responded.

Aqui fué Troya [Here stood Troy]. Don Diego ignored the presence of the ladies, and all other restraining motives. The reply had been to him like a match applied to a powder magazine.

"Rebel, disobedient son," he shouted in a rage, "I'll send you away to the Torribiós! [A severe reform-school founded by a certain Father Torribío.] Dance, or I will flog you." And he began flogging young Don Fadrique with his riding-whip.

The girl who had the guitar stopped her music for an instant in surprise; but Don Diego gave her such an angry and terrible look that she feared he might make her play by hard knocks, just as he was trying to make his son dance, and so she kept on without further pause.

When Don Fadrique had received eight or ten sound lashes, he all at once began to perform the dance, the very best he knew how.

At first the tears ran down his cheeks; but presently, upon the reflection that it was his own father that was beating him, and the whole scene striking his fancy in a comic light,—seeing his case, for instance, as if it were that of another person, he began to laugh heartily. To dance, in a coat of ceremony, to the accompaniment of a volley of whip-lashes, what could be funnier? In spite of the physical pain he was suffering, he laughed gayly, and danced with the enthusiasm of a veritable inspiration.

The ladies applauded the strange performance with all their might.

«Good! good!» now cried Don Diego. «By all the devils! have I hurt you, my son?»

«Not at all, father. It is clear I needed a double accompaniment to make me dance to-day.»

«Well, try and forget it, my boy. Why did you want to be so obstinate? What reasonable ground for refusing could you have had, when your new coat fits you as if it were simply painted on, and when you consider that the classic and high-bred *bolero* is a dance entirely suited to any gentleman? I am a little quick-tempered, I admit; but I hope these ladies will pardon me.»

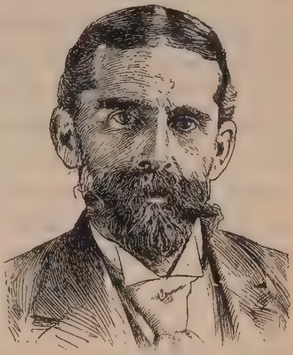
And with this ended the episode of the *bolero.*

HENRY VAN DYKE

(1852–)

The literary clergyman has made some very pleasant and important contributions to the great body of English literature. A worthy American member of the confraternity is the Rev. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, a popular and able preacher, a writer of mark upon religious subjects, and in the field of *belles-lettres* a graceful and accomplished essayist and poet.

Dr. Van Dyke comes of distinguished clerical stock,—his father being the Rev. Dr. Henry J. Van Dyke of Brooklyn, New York. Henry the son was born November 10th, 1852, at Germantown, Pennsylvania; and was educated at the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, and at Princeton, in the college and Theological Seminary. He took a further course at the German University of Berlin. His first pastorate was that of the United Congregational Church at Newport, Rhode Island, which he held from 1879 to 1882; then coming to the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York city, which charge he has since retained. Dr. Van Dyke was a Harvard preacher from 1890 to 1892; and in 1895–6 delivered the Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale, published in 1895 under the title 'The Gospel for an Age of Doubt,'—recognized as a brilliant setting forth and interpretation of the modern intellectual situation. Dr. Van Dyke's writings fall into a threefold division: sermons and other distinctly religious books; literary appreciations and papers; and poems. Of the former may be mentioned 'The Reality of Religion' (1884), 'The Story of the Psalms' (1887), 'God and Little Children' (1890), 'Straight Sermons: to Young Men and Other Human Beings' (1893), 'The Bible As It Is' (1893), 'The Christ-Child in Art: A Study of Interpretation' (1894), and 'Responsive Readings' (1895). Dr. Van Dyke is an enthusiastic student of Tennyson; and his very popular 'The Poetry of Tennyson' (1889) is one of the most authoritative and eloquent studies of the late Laureate. 'Little Rivers' (1896) contains a series of charming papers descriptive of the author's fishing excursions in picturesque places,—essays «in profitable idleness,» showing


HENRY VAN DYKE

him at his happiest in prose. ‘The National Sin of Literary Piracy’ appeared in 1888, and ‘The People Responsible for the Character of Their Rulers’ in 1895. A volume of Dr. Van Dyke's verse entitled ‘The Builders and Other Poems’ was published in 1897, and added materially to his reputation; for the verse is artistic, has genuine imagination, and is full of noble ethical feeling. This book of verse, together with the Yale lectures, the Tennyson estimate, and ‘Little Rivers,’ represents that portion of Dr. Van Dyke's writing which establishes his claim to inclusion among American men of letters.

LITTLE RIVERS

From ‘Little Rivers.’ Copyright 1895, by Charles Scribner's Sons

A RIVER is the most human and companionable of all inanimate things. It has a life, a character, a voice of its own; and is as full of good-fellowship as a sugar-maple is of sap. It can talk in various tones, loud or low; and of many subjects, grave or gay. Under favorable circumstances it will even make a shift to sing; not in a fashion that can be reduced to notes and set down in black and white on a sheet of paper, but in a vague, refreshing manner, and to a wandering air that goes

«Over the hills and far away.»

For real company and friendship, there is nothing outside of the animal kingdom that is comparable to a river.

I will admit that a very good case can be made out in favor of some other objects of natural affection. For example, a fair apology has been offered by those ambitious persons who have fallen in love with the sea. But after all, that is a formless and disquieting passion. It lacks solid comfort and mutual confidence. The sea is too big for loving, and too uncertain. It will not fit into our thoughts. It has no personality, because it has so many. It is a salt abstraction. You might as well think of loving a glittering generality like «the American woman.» One would be more to the purpose.

Mountains are more satisfying because they are more individual. It is possible to feel a very strong attachment for a certain range whose outline has grown familiar to our eyes; or a clear peak that has looked down, day after day, upon our joys and sorrows, moderating our passions with its calm aspect. We come back from our travels, and the sight of such a well-known mountain is like meeting an old friend unchanged. But it is a one-sided affection. The mountain is voiceless and imperturbable; and its very loftiness and serenity sometimes makes us the more lonely.

Trees seem to come closer to our life. They are often rooted in our richest feelings; and our sweetest memories, like birds, build nests in their branches. I remember, the last time I saw James Russell Lowell (only a few weeks before his musical voice was hushed), he walked out with me into the quiet garden at Elmwood to say good-by. There was a great horse-chestnut tree beside the house, towering above the gable, and covered with blossoms from base to summit,—a pyramid of green supporting a thousand smaller pyramids of white. The poet looked up at it with his gray, pain-furrowed face, and laid his trembling hand upon the trunk. «I planted the nut,» said he, «from which this tree grew. And my father was with me, and showed me how to plant it.»

Yes, there is a good deal to be said in behalf of tree-worship; and when I recline with my friend Tityrus beneath the shade of his favorite oak, I consent to his devotions. But when I invite him with me to share my orisons, or wander alone to indulge the luxury of grateful, unlaborious thought, my feet turn not to a tree, but to the bank of a river; for there the musings of solitude find a friendly accompaniment, and human intercourse is purified and sweetened by the flowing, murmuring water. It is by a river that I would choose to make love, and to revive old friendships, and to play with the children, and to confess my faults, and to escape from vain, selfish desires, and to cleanse my mind from all the false and foolish things that mar the joy and peace of living. Like David's hart, I pant for the water-brooks; and would follow the advice of Seneca, who says, «Where a spring rises, or a river flows, there should we build altars and offer sacrifices.»

The personality of a river is not to be found in its water, nor in its bed, nor in its shore. Either of these elements, by itself, would be nothing. Confine the fluid contents of the noblest stream in a walled channel of stone, and it ceases to be a stream; it becomes what Charles Lamb calls «a mockery of a river—a liquid artifice—a wretched conduit.» But take away the water from the most beautiful river-banks, and what is left? An ugly road with none to travel it; a long ghastly scar on the bosom of the earth.

The life of a river, like that of a human being, consists in the union of soul and body, the water and the banks. They belong together. They act and react upon each other. The stream molds and makes the shore: hollowing out a bay here and building a long point there; alluring the little bushes close to its side, and bending the tall slim trees over its current; sweeping a rocky ledge clean of everything but moss, and sending a still lagoon full of white arrow-heads and rosy knot-weed far back into the meadow. The shore guides and controls the stream: now detaining and now advancing it; now bending it in a hundred sinuous curves, and now speeding it straight as a wild bee on its homeward flight; here hiding the water in a deep cleft overhung with green branches, and there spreading it out, like a mirror framed in daisies, to reflect the sky and the clouds; sometimes breaking it with sudden turns and unexpected falls into a foam of musical laughter, sometimes soothing it into a sleepy motion like the flow of a dream.

And is it otherwise with the men and women whom we know and like? Does not the spirit influence the form, and the form affect the spirit? Can we divide and separate them in our affections?

I am no friend to purely psychological attachments. In some unknown future they may be satisfying; but in the present I want your words and your voice, with your thoughts, your looks and your gestures, to interpret your feelings. The warm, strong grasp of Great-heart's hand is as dear to me as the steadfast fashion of his friendships; the lively, sparkling eyes of the master of Rudder Grange charm me as much as the nimbleness of his fancy; and the firm poise of the Hoosier Schoolmaster's shaggy head gives me new confidence in the solidity of his views of life. I like the pure tranquillity of Isabel's brow as well as her

"—most silver flow
Of subtle-pacèd counsel in distress."

The soft cadences and turns in my Lady Katrina's speech draw me into the humor of her gentle judgments of men and things. The touches of quaintness in Angelica's dress—her folded kerchief and smooth-parted hair—seem to partake of herself, and enhance my admiration for the sweet odor of her thoughts and her old-fashioned ideals of love and duty. Even so the stream and its channel are one life; and I cannot think of the swift brown flood of the Batiscan without its shadowing primeval forests, or the crystalline current of the Boquet without its beds of pebbles and golden sand, and grassy banks embroidered with flowers.

Every country — or at least every country that is fit for habitation — has its own rivers; and every river has its own quality: and it is the part of wisdom to know and love as many as you can; seeing each in the fairest possible light, and receiving from each the best that it has to give. The torrents of Norway leap down from their mountain homes with plentiful cataracts, and run brief but glorious races to the sea. The streams of England move smoothly through green fields and beside ancient, sleepy towns. The Scotch rivers brawl through the open moorland, and flash along steep Highland glens. The rivers of the Alps are born in icy caves, from which they issue forth with furious, turbid waters; but when their anger has been forgotten in the slumber of some blue lake, they flow down more softly to see the vineyards of France and Italy, the gray castles of Germany, and the verdant meadows of Holland. The mighty rivers of the West roll their yellow floods through broad valleys, or plunge down dark cañons. The rivers of the South creep under dim arboreal archways heavy with banners of waving moss. The Delaware and the Hudson and the Connecticut are the children of the Catskills and the Adirondacks and the White Mountains, cradled among the forests of spruce and hemlock, playing through a wild woodland youth, gathering strength from numberless tributaries to bear their great burdens of lumber, and turn the wheels of many mills, issuing from the hills to water a thousand farms, and descending at last, beside new cities, to the ancient sea.

Every river that flows is good, and has something worthy to be loved. But those that we love most are always the ones that we have known best,— the stream that ran before our father's door, the current on which we ventured our first boat or cast our first fly, the brook on whose banks we first picked the twin flower of young love. However far we may travel, we come back to Naaman's state of mind: «Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?»

THE MALADY OF MODERN DOUBT

From ‹The Gospel for an Age of Doubt.› Copyright 1896, by the Macmillan Company

But why despair, unless indeed because man, in his very nature and inmost essence, is framed for an immortal hope? No other creature is filled with disgust and anger by the mere recognition of its own environment, and the realization of its own destiny. This strange issue of a purely physical evolution in a profound revolt against itself is incredibly miraculous. Can a vast universe of atoms and ether, unfolding out of darkness into darkness, produce at some point in its progress, and that point apparently the highest, a feeling of profound disappointment with its partially discovered processes, and resentful grief at its dimly foreseen end? To believe this would require a monstrous credulity. Agnosticism evades it. There are but two solutions which really face the facts. One is the black, unspeakable creed, that the source of all things is an unknown, mocking, malignant power, whose last and most cruel jest is the misery of disenchanted man. The other is the hopeful creed, that the very pain which man suffers when his spiritual nature is denied is proof that it exists, and part of the discipline by which a truthful, loving God would lead man to Himself. Let the world judge which is the more reasonable faith. But for our part, while we cling to the creed of hope, let us not fail to «cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,» and see in the very shadow that it casts, the evidence of a light behind and above it. Let us learn the meaning of that noble word of St. Augustine: «Thou hast made us for thyself; and unquiet is our heart until it rests in thee.»

Yes, the inquietude of the heart which doubt has robbed of its faith in God is an evidence that skepticism is a malady, not a normal state. The sadness of our times under the pressure of positive disbelief and negative uncertainty has in it the «promise and potency» of a return to health and happiness. Already we can see, if we look with clear eyes, the signs of what I have dared to call «the reaction out of the heart of a doubting age towards the Christianity of Christ, and the faith in Immortal Love.»

Pagan poets, full of melancholy beauty and vague regret for lost ideals, poets of decadence and despondence, the age has borne to sing its grief and gloom. But its two great singers, Tennyson and Browning, strike a clearer note of returning faith and hope. "They resume the quest; and do not pause until they find Him whom they seek." Pessimists like Hartmann work back unconsciously, from the vague remoteness of pantheism, far in the direction, at least, of a theistic view of the universe. His later books — 'Religionsphilosophie' and 'Selbstersetzung des Christenthums' — breathe a different spirit from his 'Philosophie des Unbewussten.' One of the most cautious of our younger students of philosophy has noted with care, in a recent article, the indications that "the era of doubt is drawing to a close." A statesman like Signor Crispi does not hesitate to cut loose from his former atheistic connections, and declare that "The belief in God is the fundamental basis of the healthy life of the people; while atheism puts in it the germ of an irreparable decay." The French critic, M. Edouard Rod, declares that "Only religion can regulate at the same time human thought and human action." Mr. Benjamin Kidd, from the side of English sociology, assures us that "Since man became a social creature, the development of his intellectual character has become subordinate to the development of his religious character;" and concludes that religion affords the only permanent sanction for progress. A famous biologist, Romanes, who once professed the most absolute rejection of revealed, and the most unqualified skepticism of natural, religion, thinks his way soberly back from the painful void to a position where he confesses that "it is reasonable to be a Christian believer," and dies in the full communion of the church of Jesus.

All along the line, we see men who once thought it necessary or desirable to abandon forever the soul's abode of faith in the unseen, returning by many and devious ways from the far country of doubt, driven by homesickness and hunger to seek some path which shall at least bring them in sight of a Father's house.

And meanwhile we hear the conscience, the ethical instinct of mankind, asserting itself with splendid courage and patience, even in those who have as yet found no sure ground for it to stand upon. There is a sublime contradiction between the positivist's view of man as "the hero of a lamentable drama played in an obscure corner of the universe, in virtue of blind laws, before an indifferent nature, and with annihilation for its dénouement," and the doctrine that it is his supreme duty to sacrifice himself for the good of humanity. Yet many of the skeptical thinkers of the age do not stumble at the contradiction. They hold fast to love and justice and moral enthusiasm, even though they suspect that they themselves are the products of a nature which is blind and dumb and heartless and stupid. Never have the obligations of self-restraint, and helpfulness, and equity, and universal brotherhood been preached more fervently than by some of the English agnostics.

In France a new crusade has risen; a crusade which seeks to gather into its hosts men of all creeds, and men of none, and which proclaims as its object the recovery of the sacred places of man's spiritual life, the holy land in which virtue shines forever by its own light, and the higher impulses of our nature are inspired, invincible, and immortal. On its banner M. Paul Desjardins writes the word of Tolstoy, « Il faut avoir une âme » (It is necessary to have a soul), and declares that the crusaders will follow it wherever it leads them. « For my part," he cries, « I shall not blush certainly to acknowledge as sole master the Christ preached by the doctors. I shall not recoil if my premises force me to believe, at last, as Pascal believed.»

In our own land such a crusade does not yet appear to be necessary. The disintegration of faith under the secret processes of general skepticism has not yet gone far enough to make the peril of religion evident, or to cause a new marshaling of hosts to recover and defend the forsaken shrines of man's spiritual life. When the process which is now subtly working in so many departments of our literature has gone farther, it may be needful to call for such a crusade. If so, I believe it will come. I believe that the leaders of thought,— the artists, the poets of the future,— when they stand face to face with the manifest results of negation and disillusion, which really destroy the very sphere in which alone art and poetry can live, will rise to meet the peril, and proclaim anew with one voice the watchword, « It is necessary to have a soul.» And « though a man gain the whole world, if his soul is lost, it shall profit him nothing.» But meanwhile, before the following of the errors of France in literature and art has led us to that point of spiritual impoverishment where we must imitate the organized and avowed effort to recover that which has been lost, we see a new crusade of another kind: a powerful movement of moral enthusiasm, of self-sacrifice, of altruism,— even among those who profess to be out of sympathy with Christianity,— which is a sign of promise, because it reveals a force that cries out for faith to guide and direct it. Never was there a time when the fine aspirations of the young manhood and young womanhood of our country needed a more inspiring and direct Christian leadership. The indications of this need lie open to our sight on every side. Here is a company of refined and educated people going down to make a college settlement among the poor and ignorant, to help them and lift them up. They declare that it is not a religious movement, that there is to be no preaching connected with it, that the only faith which it is to embody is faith in humanity. They choose a leader who has only that faith. But they find, under his guidance, that the movement will not move, that the work cannot be done, that it faints and fails because it lacks the spring of moral inspiration which can come only from a divine and spiritual faith. And they are forced to seek a new leader, who, although he is not a preacher, yet carries within his heart that power of religious conviction, that force of devotion to the will of God, that faith in the living and supreme Christ, which is in fact the centre of Christianity. All around the circle of human doubt and despair, where men and women are going out to enlighten and uplift and comfort and strengthen their fellow-men under the perplexities and burdens of life, we hear the cry for a gospel which shall be divine, and therefore sovereign and unquestionable and sure and victorious. All through the noblest aspirations and efforts and hopes of our age of doubt, we feel the longing, and we hear the demand, for a new inspiration of Christian faith.

AN ANGLER'S WISH

From 'The Builders and Other Poems.' Copyright 1897, by Charles Scribner's Sons

I

When tulips bloom in Union Square,
And timid breaths of vernal air
Go wandering down the dusty town,
Like children lost in Vanity Fair;

When every long, unlovely row
Of westward houses stands aglow,
And leads the eyes toward sunset skies
Beyond the hills where green trees grow;

Then weary seems the street parade,
And weary books, and weary trade:
I'm only wishing to go a-fishing,—
For this the month of May was made.

II

I guess the pussy-willows now
Are creeping out on every bough
Along the brook; and robins look
For early worms behind the plow.

The thistle-birds have changed their dun
For yellow coats, to match the sun;
And in the same array of flame
The Dandelion Show's begun.

The flocks of young anemones
Are dancing round the budding trees:
Who can help wishing to go a-fishing
In days as full of joy as these?

III

I think the meadow-lark's clear sound
Leaks upward slowly from the ground,
While on the wing the bluebirds ring
Their wedding-bells to woods around.

The flirting chewink calls his dear
Behind the bush; and very near,
Where water flows, where green grass grows,
Song-sparrows gently sing, «Good cheer.»

And best of all, through twilight's calm
The hermit-thrush repeats his psalm:
How much I'm wishing to go a-fishing
In days so sweet with music's balm!

IV

'Tis not a proud desire of mine;
I ask for nothing superfine;
No heavy weight, no salmon great,
To break the record, or my line:

Only an idle little stream,
Whose amber waters softly gleam,
Where I may wade, through woodland shade,
And cast the fly, and loaf and dream;

Only a trout or two, to dart
From foaming pools, and try my art:
No more I'm wishing — old-fashioned fishing,
And just a day on Nature's heart.

TENNYSON

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From the misty shores of midnight, touched with splendors of the moon,
To the singing tides of heaven, and the light more clear than noon,
Passed a soul that grew to music till it was with God in tune.

Brother of the greatest poets, true to nature, true to art;
Lover of Immortal Love, uplifter of the human heart:
Who shall cheer us with high music, who shall sing, if thou depart?

Silence here — for love is silent, gazing on the lessening sail;
Silence here — for grief is voiceless when the mighty minstrels fail;
Silence here — but far beyond us, many voices crying, Hail!

THE VEERY

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The moonbeams over Arno's vale in silver flood were pouring,
When first I heard the nightingale a long-lost love deploring.
So passionate, so full of pain, it sounded strange and eerie:
I longed to hear a simpler strain, — the wood-notes of the veery.

The laverock sings a bonny lay above the Scottish heather;
It sprinkles down from far away like light and love together;
He drops the golden notes to greet his brooding mate, his dearie:
I only know one song more sweet, — the vespers of the veery.

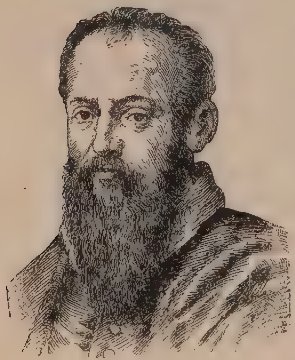
In English gardens, green and bright and full of fruity treasure,
I heard the blackbird with delight repeat his merry measure;
The ballad was a pleasant one, the tune was loud and cheery, —
And yet, with every setting sun, I listened for the veery.

But far away, and far away, the tawny thrush is singing;
New England woods, at close of day, with that clear chant are ringing;
And when my light of life is low, and heart and flesh are weary,
I fain would hear, before I go, the wood-notes of the veery.

GIORGIO VASARI

(1512–1574)

The contemporary of Michel Angelo, of Raphael, and of Andrea del Sarto, Giorgio Vasari was himself a painter and architect of reputation. His name would however probably be forgotten to-day, were it not for his literary achievement in the 'Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects.' In the sketch of himself which Vasari gives in this work, he tells the story of the book's origin and development, evidently regarding it as a mere incident in a busy and renowned life.



Giorgio Vasari

«One evening,» he writes,—«one evening among others the conversation fell on the Museum of Giovio, and on the portraits of illustrious men placed there in admirable order and with appropriate inscriptions; when, passing from one thing to another, as is done in conversation, Monsignore Giovio said that he always had felt, and still did feel, a great wish to add to his museum, and to his book of 'Eulogies' a treatise concerning men who had distinguished themselves in the art of design, from Cimabue down to our own times. He spoke at some length on the subject, giving proof of much knowledge and judgment in matters concerning our arts. It is nevertheless true, that as he was treating only of generalities, and did not enter into the matter very closely, he often made some confusion among the artists cited, changing their names, families, birthplaces, etc., or attributing the work of one to the hand of another; not describing things as they were precisely, but rather treating of them in the mass.

«When Giovio had finished his discourse, the cardinal turning to me said, 'What think you, Giorgio,—would not this be a fine work, a noble labor?' 'Admirable, indeed, most illustrious my lord,' replied I: 'provided Giovio be assisted by some one belonging to our calling, who can put things into their right places, and relate them as they have really occurred; and this I say because, although the discourse he has just concluded is admirable, yet he has often made assertions that are not correct, and said one thing for another.' 'Could you not, then,' replied the cardinal, being incited thereunto by Giovio, Caro, Tolomei, and the rest,—'could you not supply him with a summary of these matters, and with notices of all these artists,— their works being arranged in the order of time,— whereby you would confer that benefit also on your arts?› This, although I knew the undertaking beyond my strength, I was yet willing to attempt, with such power as I possessed, and promised to do it according to the best of my ability.»

He continues to tell us that he promptly gathered his material together for this work. He was, indeed, somewhat abundantly supplied with notes, as since his boyhood he had collected for his own recreation what items he could find concerning the great artists. When he presented the summary to Monsignore Giovio, that gentleman was so pleased with the style that he persuaded Vasari to prepare the book himself. Thus it is that Signor Giorgio Vasari won his title to many generations of fame.

He was born in Arezzo in 1512. There as a child he copied the pictures in the churches, encouraged always by his good father, Messer Antonio. When Giorgio was nine years of age, his father took him to pay his respects to their kinsman, Cardinal Silvio Passerini, who was visiting Arezzo. This prelate was much impressed by the boy's familiarity with Virgil and with the rudiments of learning, as well as by his proficiency in drawing. He persuaded Messer Antonio to conduct his son to Florence; and here the boy was placed with Alessandro and Ippolito dei Medici in the study of the classics, and was put to learn design under the great Michel Angelo.

Early in life Giorgio Vasari began a career of success. He was an indomitable worker; and during a very brief interval between his days of student life and those of the remunerated artist, he painted assiduously frescoes for the peasantry outside of Arezzo, for the mere sake of the experience to be gained therefrom. On the death of his father, the care of younger brothers and sisters devolved on him; and in order to meet the responsibility, he was forced to practice for a time in Florence the art of the goldsmith. Commissions for painting soon overtook him, however; and despite the astonishing rapidity with which he worked, it was no longer possible for him to fulfill the demands made upon his time. He became the darling of the court: but the precariousness of such a popularity speedily impressed itself upon him. «The promises of this world,» he writes, «are for the most part but vain phantoms; to confide in one's self and to become something of worth and value is the best and safest course.» His popularity, however, in no way diminished after he ceased to rely upon it as a means of advancement. His personality was such as to inspire affection.

It was largely his quality of friendliness which led him to accomplish so admirably the literary work by which he lives to-day. He was in close personal relations with the artists of his country, and one of their own calling. He was always their comrade, never their rival. “Who,” exclaims the Padre della Valle, “would not become the friend of Vasari!” He had the power of drawing into sympathy those who were gathered round him: thus it is that in the ‘Lives’ we feel, not like students ferreting for facts in the careers of great men, but rather as honored guests introduced to a coterie of congenial spirits. The work has not escaped the just charge of inaccuracies, and has been corrected and annotated by Della Valle, Rumohr, Förster, and others. As a critic, however, Vasari has always the spirit of justice, and is usually able to lay aside personal sympathy and to assume dispassionate judgment. His style is pure and ingenuous, relieved by a refined and subdued humor; not infrequently he ascends to elequence,—that somewhat rare eloquence in which one thinks less of rhetoric than of the sentiment expressed, and in which, despite the enthusiasm of the writer, one yet feels that he is not controlled by his subject, but is still master of it.

Vasari died in Florence in 1574, while occupied in painting the cupola of the Duomo. As the tourist reads in his Baedeker to-day that the prophets in the lantern were the last work of Giorgio Vasari, he looks at them curiously, knowing that it was not as a literary critic, but as an artist, that this man expected to go down to posterity. Yet after the passage of three hundred years, his book remains an authority; if not in every particular congenial to the disciples of Ruskin, it yet accords with the prevailing judgment of to-day. He himself says of his works that if the future finds no excellence in them, it must yet recognize “an ardent wish to do well, . . . with great and enduring industry, and a true love for these our arts.” What greater tribute than this modest assertion can be paid to a work accomplished by a master whom three centuries have pronounced a man of knowledge and intelligence?

RAPHAEL SANZIO

From ‘Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects’

The large and liberal hand wherewith Heaven is sometimes pleased to accumulate the infinite riches of its treasures on the head of one sole favorite—showering on him all those rare gifts and graces which are more commonly distributed among a larger number of individuals, and accorded at long intervals of time only—has been clearly exemplified in the well-known instance of Raphael Sanzio of Urbino.

No less excellent than graceful, he was endowed by nature with all that modesty and goodness which may occasionally be perceived in those few favored persons who enhance the gracious sweetness of a disposition more than usually gentle, by the fair ornament of a winning amenity, always ready to conciliate, and constantly giving evidence of the most refined consideration for all persons, and under every circumstance. The world received the gift of this artist from the hand of Nature, when, vanquished by Art in the person of Michel Angelo, she deigned to be subjugated in that of Raphael, not by art only but by goodness also. And of a truth, since the greater number of artists had up to that period derived from nature a certain rudeness and eccentricity, which not only rendered them uncouth and fantastic, but often caused the shadows and darkness of vice to be more conspicuous in their lives than the light and splendor of those virtues by which man is rendered immortal,—so was there good cause wherefore she should, on the contrary, make all the rarest qualities of the heart to shine resplendently in her Raphael; perfecting them by so much diffidence, grace, application to study, and excellence of life, that these alone would have sufficed to veil or neutralize every fault, however important, and to efface all defects, however glaring they might have been. Truly may we affirm that those who are the possessors of endowments so rich and varied as were assembled in the person of Raphael, are scarcely to be called simple men only,—they are rather, if it be permitted so to speak, entitled to the appellation of mortal gods; and further are we authorized to declare, that he who by means of his works has left an honored name in the records of fame here below, may also hope to enjoy such rewards in heaven as are commensurate to and worthy of their labors and merits.

Raphael was born at Urbino—a most renowned city of Italy—on Good Friday of the year 1483, at three o'clock of the night. His father was a certain Giovanni de' Santi; a painter of no great eminence in his art, but a man of sufficient intelligence nevertheless, and perfectly competent to direct his children into that good way which had not, for his misfortune, been laid open to himself in his younger days. And first, as he knew how important it is that a child should be nourished by the milk of its own mother, and not by that of the hired nurse, so he determined when his son Raphael (to whom he gave that name at his baptism, as being one of good augury) was born to him, that the mother of the child, he having no other,—as indeed he never had more,—should herself be the nurse of the child. Giovanni further desired that in his tender years the boy should rather be brought up to the habits of his own family, and beneath his paternal roof, than be sent where he must acquire habits and manners less refined, and modes of thought less commendable, in the houses of the peasantry or other untaught persons. As the child became older, Giovanni began to instruct him in the first principles of painting; perceiving that he was much inclined to that art, and finding him to be endowed with a most admirable genius: few years had passed, therefore, before Raphael, though still but a child, became a valuable assistant to his father in the numerous works which the latter executed in the State of Urbino.

At length this good and affectionate parent, knowing that his son would acquire but little of his art from himself, resolved to place him with Pietro Perugino, who, according to what Giovanni had been told, was then considered to hold the first place among the painters of the time. Wherefore, proceeding to Perugia for that purpose, and finding Pietro to be absent from the city, he occupied himself—to the end that he might await the return of the master with the less inconvenience—in the execution of certain works for the church of San Francesco in that place. But when Pietro had returned to Perugia, Giovanni, who was a person of very good manners and pleasing deportment, soon formed an amicable acquaintanceship with him; and when the proper opportunity arrived, made known to him the desire he had conceived, in the most suitable manner that he could devise. Thereupon Pietro, who was also exceedingly courteous, as well as a lover of fine genius, agreed to accept the care of Raphael. Giovanni then returned to Urbino; and having taken the boy, though not without many tears from his mother, who loved him tenderly, he conducted him to Perugia: when Pietro no sooner beheld his manner of drawing, and observed the pleasing deportment of the youth, than he conceived that opinion of him which was in due time so amply confirmed by the results produced in the after life of Raphael. . . .

But I have now discoursed respecting these questions of art at more length perhaps than was needful, and will return to the life and death of Raphael. This master lived in the strictest intimacy with Bernardo Divizio, Cardinal of Bibbiena, who had for many years importuned him to take a wife of his selection; nor had Raphael directly refused compliance with the wishes of the cardinal, but had put the matter off, by saying that he would wait some three or four years longer. The term which he had thus set, approached before Raphael had thought of it, when he was reminded by the cardinal of his promise; and being as he ever was, just and upright, he would not depart from his word, and therefore accepted a niece of the cardinal himself for his wife. But as this engagement was nevertheless a very heavy restraint to him, he put off the marriage from time to time; insomuch that several months passed, and the ceremony had not yet taken place. Yet this was not done without a very honorable motive; for Raphael having been for many years in the service of the count, and being the creditor of Leo X. for a large sum of money, had received an intimation to the effect that when the hall with which he was then occupied was completed, the pontiff intended to reward him for his labors as well as to do honor to his talents by bestowing on him the red hat, of which he meant to distribute a considerable number, many of them being designed for persons whose merits were greatly inferior to those of Raphael. The painter meanwhile did not abandon the light attachment by which he was enchained: and one day, on returning to his house from one of these secret visits, he was seized with a violent fever, which being mistaken for a cold, the physicians inconsiderately caused him to be bled; whereby he found himself exhausted, when he had rather required to be strengthened. Thereupon he made his will, and as a good Christian he sent the object of his attachment from the house, but left her a sufficient provision wherewith she might live in decency: having done so much, he divided his property among his disciples,—Giulio Romano, that is to say, whom he always loved greatly, and Giovanni Francesco, with whom was joined a certain priest of Urbino who was his kinsman, but whose name I do not know. He furthermore commanded that a certain portion of his property should be employed in the restoration of one of the ancient tabernacles in Santa Maria Ritonda, which he had selected as his burial-place, and for which he had ordered that an altar, with the figure of Our Lady in marble, should be prepared; all that he possessed besides he bequeathed to Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco,—naming Messer Baldassare da Pescia, who was then datary to the Pope, as his executor. He then confessed, and in much contrition completed the course of his life, on the day whereon it had commenced, which was Good Friday. The master was then in the thirty-seventh year of his age, and as he embellished the world by his talents while on earth, so is it to be believed that his soul is now adorning heaven.

After his death, the body of Raphael was placed at the upper end of the hall wherein he had last worked, with the picture of the Transfiguration which he had executed for Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, at the head of the corpse. He who, regarding that living picture, afterwards turned to consider that dead body, felt his heart bursting with grief as he beheld them. The loss of Raphael caused the cardinal to command that this work should be placed on the high altar of San Pietro-a-Montorio, where it has ever since been held in the utmost veneration for its own great value, as well as for the excellence of its author. The remains of this divine artist received that honorable sepulture which the noble spirit whereby they had been informed had so well deserved; nor was there any artist in Rome who did not deeply bewail the loss sustained by the departure of the master, or who failed to accompany his remains to their repose.

The death of Raphael was in like manner deplored by all the papal court: not only because he had formed part thereof, since he had held the office of chamberlain to the pontiff, but also because Leo X. had esteemed him so highly, that his loss occasioned that sovereign the bitterest grief. O most happy and thrice blessed spirit, of whom all are proud to speak, whose actions are celebrated with praise by all men, and the least of whose works left behind thee is admired and prized!

When this noble artist died, well might Painting have departed also; for when he closed his eyes, she too was left as it were blind. But now to us, whose lot it is to come after him, there remains to imitate the good, or rather the excellent, of which he has left us the example; and as our obligations to him and his great merits well deserve, to retain the most grateful remembrance of him in our hearts, while we ever maintain his memory in the highest honor with our lips. To him of a truth it is that we owe the possession of invention, coloring, and execution, brought alike and altogether to that point of perfection for which few could have dared to hope; nor has any man ever aspired to pass before him.

And in addition to the benefits which this great master conferred on art, being as he was its best friend, we have the further obligation to him of having taught us by his life in what manner we should comport ourselves towards great men, as well as towards those of lower degree, and even towards the lowest; nay, there was among his many extraordinary gifts one of such value and importance, that I can never sufficiently admire it, and always think thereof with astonishment. This was the power accorded to him by Heaven, of bringing all who approached his presence into harmony; an effect inconceivably surprising in our calling, and contrary to the nature of our artists: yet all, I do not say of the inferior grades only, but even those who lay claim to be great personages (and of this humor our art produces immense numbers), became as of one mind, once they began to labor in the society of Raphael; continuing in such unity and concord that all harsh feelings and evil dispositions became subdued, and disappeared at the sight of him, every vile and base thought departing from the mind before his influence. Such harmony prevailed at no other time than his own. And this happened because all were surpassed by him in friendly courtesy as well as in art; all confessed the influence of his sweet and gracious nature, which was so replete with excellence, and so perfect in all the charities, that not only was he honored by men, but even by the very animals, who would constantly follow his steps, and always loved him.

We find it related that whenever any other painter, whether known to Raphael or not, requested any design or assistance of whatever kind at his hands, he would invariably leave his work to do him service; he continually kept a large number of artists employed, all of whom he assisted and instructed with an affection which was rather as that of a father to his children, than merely as of an artist to artists. From these things it followed that he was never seen to go to court but surrounded and accompanied, as he left his house, by some fifty painters,— all men of ability and distinction,— who attended him thus to give evidence of the honor in which they held him. He did not, in short, live the life of the painter, but that of a prince. Wherefore, O art of painting! well mightest thou for thy part then esteem thyself most happy, having, as thou hadst, one artist among thy sons by whose virtues and talents thou wert thyself exalted to heaven. Thrice blessed indeed mayest thou declare thyself, since thou hast seen thy disciples, by pursuing the footsteps of a man so exalted, acquire the knowledge of how life should be employed, and become impressed with the importance of uniting the practice of virtue to that of art. Conjoined as these were in the person of Raphael, their force availed to constrain the greatness of Julius II. and to awaken the generosity of Leo X.; both of whom, high as they were in dignity, selected him for their most intimate friend, and treated him with every kind of familiarity: insomuch that by means of the favor he enjoyed with them, and the powers with which they invested him, he was able to do the utmost honor to himself and to art. Most happy also may well be called those who, being in his service, worked under his own eye; since it has been found that all who took pains to imitate this master have arrived at a safe haven, and attained to a respectable position. In like manner, all who do their best to emulate his labors in art will be honored on earth, as it is certain that all who resemble him in the rectitude of his life will receive their reward in heaven.

Translation of Mrs. Jonathan Foster.

HENRY VAUGHAN

(1621-1693)

THERE is a quality about certain seventeenth-century writers of religious verse — Herbert, Crashaw, Quarles, and Vaughan — which makes them precious to the lovers of poetry. They had at times a mystic worshipfulness, a tenderness and depth of feeling, in the expression of spiritual aspiration, very rare and very lovely. They had too in common, though in varying degrees, something of literary genius; which, if it did not show in work steadily artistic and above criticism, was manifested in gleams and flashes, when the magic word was caught and the inevitable phrase coined. This applies in full force to Henry Vaughan, whose poems, in a few classic examples, burn with a pure flame of religious fervor, and have a charm that makes them unforgettable.

Henry Vaughan — the Silurist, as he was called because of his residence among the Silures, the ancient name for the folk of South Wales — was born at Newton-by-Usk in that principality, in the year 1621. His family was an old and highly respectable one of the vicinage. Educated by a private tutor, he with his twin brother Thomas entered Jesus College, Oxford, in 1638, but was not graduated. Both the young Vaughans were stanch royalists, that political complexion being a tradition in the family; Henry was imprisoned during the Civil War. His private patrimony being inadequate to his support, he qualified for medicine, and practiced that profession with repute for many years in his native place. His literary work was thus an avocation pursued for the love of it. During his long and quiet life, Vaughan published various volumes of poems and translations. His first book appeared when he was twenty-five, and bore the title ‘Poems, with the Tenth Satire of Juvenal Englished’ (1646). Subsequent books were: ‘Olor Iscanus, a Collection of Select Poems and Translations’ (1650); ‘Silex Scintillans, or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations’ (1650-1); ‘The Mount of Olives, or Solitary Devotions’ (1652); ‘Flores Solitudinis, or Certain Rare and Elegant Pieces’ (1654); and ‘Thalia Rediviva, the Pastimes and Diversions of a Country Muse, in Divine Poems’ (1678).

The verse which preserves Vaughan's name in fragrant memory is contained in the ‘Silex Scintillans.’ Half a dozen pieces in that collection are familiar to all students of the choicest English religious song. The quaint classical titles of his books give a notion of the mystic, removed nature of this poet's Muse. In many lyrics he waxes didactic, and moralizes upon man and God in a fashion not edifying to the present-day reader, if it was when they were composed. But when inspiration visited him, and he could write such a unique poem as 'The Retreate'—a kind of seventeenth-century forerunner of Wordsworth's 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality'—or an exquisite elegiac poem like 'They are All Gone' (a prime favorite with Lowell), Vaughan found lyric expression for the spiritual mood such as few men have found in the whole range of British song. His religion did not clog his poetry, but lent it wings; and no more sincere and intimate personal confession of faith can be named. He has the high rhapsody of the Celt, with a piquant gift in the use of the mother English. One thinks of him with affection, and re-reads his best poems with a sense of beauty communicated, and a breath deeper taken for delight.

During his last years Vaughan seems to have ceased from literary activity. He lived quietly in the lovely vale watered by the Usk, the river he loved; and having attained to the good age of seventy-two, died on April 23d—Shakespeare's death-day—in the year 1693. The genuine humility of the man is implied in the Latin inscription he desired to have placed upon his tomb: «An unprofitable servant, the chief of sinners, I lie here. Glory be to God! Lord have mercy upon me!»

THE RETREATE

Happy those early dayes when I
Shined in my angell infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestiall thought;
When yet I had not walkt above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flowre
My gazing soul would dwell an houre,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinfull sound,

Or had the black art to dispence
A severall sinne to every sence,
But felt through all this fleshly dresse
Bright shootes of everlastingnesse.
Oh how I long to travell back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plaine,
Where first I left my glorious traine;
From whence th' inlightned spirit sees
That shady city of palme-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came—return.

THE ORNAMENT

The lucky world shewed me one day
Her gorgeous mart and glittering store,
Where with proud haste the rich made way
To buy, the poor came to adore.

Serious they seemed, and bought up all
The latest modes of pride and lust;
Although the first must surely fall,
And the last is most loathsome dust.

But while each gay, alluring ware,
With idle hearts and busie looks,
They viewed,—for idleness hath there
Laid up all her archives and books,—

Quite through their proud and pompous file,
Blushing, and in meek weeds arrayed,
With native looks which knew no guile,
Came the sheep-keeping Syrian maid.

Whom strait the shining row all faced,
Forced by her artless looks and dress;
While one cryed out, We are disgraced!
For she is bravest, you confess.

THEY ARE ALL GONE

THEY are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit ling'ring here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy brest,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Meer glimmerings and decays.

O holy hope! and high humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have shewed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death — the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted theams,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that lockt her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphære.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under thee!
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill
Where I shall need no glass.

THE REVIVAL

Unfold! unfold! take in His light,
Who makes thy cares more short than night.
The joyes which with his day-star rise
He deals to all but drowsie eyes;
And (what the men of this world miss)
Some drops and dews of future bliss.

Hark! how the winds have changed their note,
And with warm whispers call thee out!
The frosts are past, the storms are gone,
And backward life at last comes on.
The lofty groves, in express joyes,
Reply unto the turtle's voice:
And here, in dust and dirt,—oh, here,
The lilies of his love appear!

RETIREMENT

Fresh fields and woods! the earth's fair face!
God's footstool! and man's dwelling-place!
I ask not why the first believer
Did love to be a country liver,
Who to secure pious content
Did pitch by groves and wells his tent,
Where he might view the boundless skie,
And all these glorious lights on high,
With flying meteors, mists and showers,
Subjected hills, trees, meads, and flowers,
And every minute bless the King
And wise Creator of each thing.
I ask not why he did remove
To happy Mamre's holy grove,
Leaving the cities of the plain
To Lot and his successless train.
All various lusts in cities still
Are found: they are the thrones of ill;

The dismal sinks where blood is spilled,
Cages with much uncleanness filled.
But rural shades are the sweet sense
Of piety and innocence:
They are the meek's calm region, where
Angels descend and rule the sphære;
Where heaven lies leaguer, and the Dove
Duely as dew comes from above.
If Eden be on earth at all,
'Tis that which we the country call.

THE PALM-TREE

Deare friend, sit down, and bear awhile this shade,
As I have yours long since: this plant, you see
So prest and bowed, before sin did degrade
Both you and it, had equall liberty

With other trees; but now, shut from the breath
And air of Eden, like a malcontent,
It thrives nowhere. This makes these weights, like death
And sin, hang at him; for the more he's bent,

The more he grows. Celestial natures still
Aspire for home; this, Solomon of old,
By flowers and carvings, and mysterious skill
Of wings and cherubims and palms, foretold.

This is the life which, hid above with Christ
In God, doth always hidden multiply,
And spring and grow,—a tree ne'er to be priced,
A tree whose fruit is immortality.

Here spirits that have run their race, and fought,
And won the fight, and have not feared the frowns
Nor loved the smiles of greatness, but have wrought
Their Master's will, meet to receive their crowns.

Here is the patience of the saints: this tree
Is watered by their tears, as flowers are fed
With dew by night; but One you cannot see
Sits here, and numbers all the tears they shed.

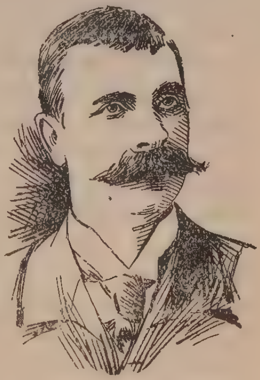
Here is their faith too, which if you will keep
When we two part, I will a journey make
To pluck a garland hence while you do sleep,
And weave it for your head against you wake.

IVAN VAZOFF

(1850–)

BY LUCY CATLIN BULL

The remote principality of Bulgaria does not attract a large share of the world's attention. But small butterflies may have great peacock's-eyes, with glintings and delicate gradations of color — inky blots too, and deep shadows! These are not only worth examining,— they may become in a collection a source of permanent enjoyment. And if life in Bulgaria, either from the moral or the material point of view, has ever so few phenomena that have a peculiar vividness not to be found elsewhere, then it is only a question of time before the world begins to feel the richer for them. That the rugged little country really abounds in poetic and picturesque elements, may be inferred from the fact that her strongest and most prolific writer has been able to confine himself, partly from choice, partly from instinct, to the treatment of life in Bulgaria, without forfeiting his claim to the serious consideration of readers in all parts of the world. In other words, nothing could be racier of the soil than the poems and romances of Ivan Vazoff, born in 1850 in the little town of Sopot, under the shadow of the Great Balkan. No book was ever more thoroughly and lovingly steeped in local color than his most widely read novel, 'Under the Yoke.' But his patriotism, poured out year after year in a cause that seemed utterly hopeless, takes a form so exalted as to raise him above the mere delineator of character and gatherer of specimens. Besides, an irresistible affinity felt in boyhood for writers like Béranger and Victor Hugo, could but have a happy effect on a nervous style, and a diction reminding the reader of the mountain torrents it dwells upon. Who shall say how far a scrupulous choice of words, and a keen ear for the harmonies of verse and prose, may not have tended to rescue the young revolutionist from becoming the ephemeral organ of a political insurrection?



IVAN VAZOFF

Although it was from Victor Hugo that Vazoff drew the motto, «De verre pour gémir; d'airain pour résister» (Glass for sorrow, brass for courage), prefixing it to a volume of his poems, still the foreign influence only took the form of a wholesome infusion. Even in the seventies, when a few brave hearts were pushing the cause of emancipation in spite of their cautious countrymen, and when only the very rich could aspire to an education, Bulgaria had preachers of revolution whose eloquence was of no mean order, and the beginnings of a literature. For the men in exile and active warfare against Turkish oppression, who turned so readily from the sword to the pen, looking upon both merely as a means to an end, were nevertheless genuine poets, natural orators, and belonged to a race who in spite of the narrowing of their horizon through four centuries of suffering, could not forget that in past ages, under rulers distinguished for courage or learning, their realm had held a high place among the nations. Even Russia, at times the benefactor of Bulgaria, will always remain her debtor. For the language of that powerful neighbor is said to have been molded by missionaries of the Greek Church sent from Bulgaria not far from the eleventh century; and was perhaps in large part the gift of a country that possessed an alphabet and a written tongue, while the future empire was still in a state of semi-barbarism. The language so similar at the outset to Bulgarian has developed into a noble and unique instrument, which hardly any scholar in the coming century, aware that Russian abounds in works of importance, will think that he can do without. And although in enslaved Bulgaria the language could not escape degeneration,—although modern Bulgarian is less musical than Russian, and has lost the inflections the latter retains,—still it is not without dignity, and the nomenclature is almost enough to show that it may have a music of its own: the name for the range we call the Great Balkan, because the Turks have bestowed that name upon it, is Stara Planina.

That Bulgarian comes very close to Russian is not always appreciated in Russia itself. At Moscow, in the summer of 1895, a young writer remarked to Vazoff, who had come with the deputation from Bulgaria that laid a wreath on the tomb of Alexander III., «What a pity that the inscription on the wreath is in Russian instead of Bulgarian!»

«But it is from beginning to end a Bulgarian inscription that you see there,» returned the poet, compressing into one quick movement the mingled pride and chagrin of centuries.

The attar-yielding Valley of Roses, lying between the Stara Planina and the parallel range of the Sredna Gora, contributed a certain aroma to the new era that ended, less than twenty years ago, in complete emancipation from Turkish rule. It was there in 1848, in the free town of Calofer, clinging to the mountain-side, that the truly inspired poet and revolutionist Boteff was born; and as it happened, his fellow-poet Vazoff, born in the Valley of the Strema, attended school for a short time in the same place. A boy like Christo Boteff, ardent and high-strung,—destined to lay down his life for his country before reaching his thirtieth year,—could not have been brought up in surroundings more stimulating to the imagination. It was in a veritable garden of roses that his life began; and he can scarcely write without some mention of the mighty forest that lay so near. His birthplace, founded by the brigand Calofer and named after him, was one of the few places that by virtue of their remoteness had preserved a measure of independence. Unlike most Bulgarian towns and villages, it had at the centre no Turkish habitation; so that the poet's love of freedom, which was far from being local and national,—recognizing the effects of misrule not only in his own country, but in Russia, in Africa, indeed throughout the world,—was taken in with the mountain air he breathed. The founder, Calofer, belonged to a distinct class called *haïdouti* or brigands (otherwise it is impossible to translate a word half-way between hero and highwayman), whose open hostility to the Turkish government compelled them to take refuge, oftentimes in Rumania, but in mild weather in the stupendous gorges and caverns of the Stara Planina. Boteff was neither one of the earliest nor one of the latest martyrs to the cause. He did not live to shudder at the massacres of the Sredna-Gora, which moved the Emperor of Russia, Alexander II., to come to the relief of Bulgaria, and his son, afterwards Alexander III., to take an active part in the campaign which in 1878 exacted her independence. Boteff's poem on the death of his friend Hadjy-Dimitre is remarkable for its unconscious foreshadowing of his own death, similar in all respects to that of the hero he brooded over with such intense affection:—

HADJY DIMITRE

HE LIVES, he lives! There on the Balkan's crest,
Low-lying in his blood, he maketh moan—
The hero with a deep wound in his breast,
The hero in his youth and might o'erthrown.

He hath laid down his gun, in bitter woe
Laid down the two halves of his broken sword;
His eyes more dim and head more restless grow,
While maledictions from his mouth are poured.

Helpless he lies; and at her harvesting—
Beneath the blazing sky, the startled sun—

A maiden somewhere in the field doth sing,
And swifter than before the blood doth run.

'Tis harvest-time,—sing then your mournful staves,
Ye melancholy folk that toil apart!
Burn fiercely, sun, across a land of slaves!
One hero more must die—but hush, my heart!

Who falls in fight for liberty's dear sake
Can never die;—heaven weeps for him, and earth;
Nature herself—the woodland creatures wake
Hymns in his honor; poets sing his worth.

By day the eagle lends a hovering shade;
The wolf steals softly up to lick his wound;
The falcon, bird of battle, droops dismayed
To see his brother stretched upon the ground.

Night falls: uncounted stars are in the sky;
The moon looks forth; the woods and winds erelong
Begin an ever-waxing melody,—
The Balkan chants the brigand's battle-song.

At last the nymphs, half hid in filmy white,—
Enchantresses that tender lays repeat,—
Downsliding, on the emerald turf alight,
And gently near the sufferer take their seat.

One binds his wounds with herbs and healing strips;
One sprinkles him with water from the brook;
A third has kissed him lightly on the lips,
And wistfully he meets her winning look:—

«Tell me, my sister, tell me only this:
Where is Karadjata, my comrade dear?
Where too the faithful company I miss?
Then take my soul, for I would perish here.»

They clap their hands, that done they interlace.
Singing they soar into the first faint streak
Of morning, soar and sing through boundless space:
Karadjata, it is thy soul they seek.

Day breaks, and ever on the Balkan's brow
The hero maketh moan, his blood still flows,
And the wolf licks his yawning wound. Lo, now,
The sun bursts forth and still more fiercely glows!

Dimitre perished, and his army were scattered and slain in 1868. The poem is dated 1873. In 1876 Boteff, with less than three hundred followers, arrived in the same wilderness, and fell in battle near the town of Vratza; where his head, which had been remarkable for its beauty, was displayed by the Turks on a pole.

The enthusiasm and personal magnetism of Boteff were for a long time a distinct influence in the life of Vazoff. Of the two, Boteff was the more creative, original, and impassioned singer; yet the exquisitely finished verse of Vazoff is not without spontaneity. One of his most fervent lyrics was sung at the insurrection of Klissoura; and his range, embracing not only two large volumes of verse, but an astonishing variety of works in prose, is much wider.

The year 1870 was a memorable one for Bulgaria. It was marked by her first step toward freedom; the Turkish government at last recognizing the constitution of the Bulgarian Church, and thus reluctantly paving the way for intellectual progress and political self-assertion. The year was further marked by Vazoff's first original poem, 'The Pine-Tree'; sent in October to the Perioditchesko Spisanie, or Memorial of the Bulgarian Literary Association, conducted by exiles in Rumania. The poet's father, a merchant in comfortable circumstances, had done his utmost to fit the boy for a business life, but in vain: he had shown his energy chiefly in the verses he scribbled on the margin of the books of the establishment. The 'Pine-Tree' is a powerful allegory, painting in a few masterly strokes the development and downfall of that ancient kingdom of Bulgaria to which a stunted nation looked wistfully back, and closing with a vivid picture of the victorious Turk bending in compassion over his fallen enemy. For it is matter of history that the Oriental monarch regarded with admiration the reigning tsar of Bulgaria, and after his retirement continued to show him every mark of respect and courtesy.

In 1877 word came to Vazoff that his birthplace had been destroyed, his father put to death by the Turks, and his mother and brothers imprisoned in a monastery "in the heart of the Rhodope" (a region afterwards described in one of his principal works, bearing that title). His afflictions, far from diminishing his powers, seem only to have stimulated them; and were followed by the period of rapid production to which his best work belongs. It was at this time that he composed 'The Epic'—not strictly an epic—'of the Forgotten,' which a Bulgarian journal calls his most popular book. He also conducted the journal Knowledge; and undertook, in collaboration with Velitchkoff, a complete anthology of Bulgarian literature, besides beginning with him the task of translating into Bulgarian the literature of ancient and modern times. After the independence of Bulgaria had been established, he became deputy to the national assembly: but the active part he took in the political troubles of 1886 resulted in his banishment; and it was at Odessa, in 1889, that he completed his masterpiece,—whose title, 'Pod Igoto,' is the exact equivalent for the phrase 'Under the Yoke.'

Recalled to Sofia in the same year, he has made it his home ever since; and has poured out poems, novels, idyls, historical sketches—and several dramas, one or two of which were performed with signal success. After visiting the antique monastery of the Rilo, far up in the Balkan and hemmed in by the forest, he wrote an admirable work in prose called 'The Vast Solitude of the Rilo.' The site of the monastery is significant. On the borderland between Thrace and Macedonia, and in the centre of the Balkanic peninsula, it reminds the student of Oriental affairs that at one period the province of Macedonia formed half of the realm of Bulgaria. Even now it is said that you cannot go shopping or marketing in Macedonia without a knowledge of Bulgarian. But owing to the indecision of the Powers, instead of sharing in 1878 the good fortune secured to Bulgaria by the treaty of Berlin, Macedonia remained a Turkish province; and bleeding and helpless, awaits the wave of emancipation that of late years has lifted so many classes and communities out of intolerable serfdom.

Crowded with incidents, episodes, and types of humanity, the rich mosaic called 'Pod Igoto' has been pronounced by an English critic the most brilliant romance that the East of Europe has given to the Occident. The rollicking humor and home-bred sense pervading the book, and tempering not a little the barbarities that must enter into any narrative of life in a Turkish dependency; the high sense of honor shown by the hero Ognianoff; the descriptions of dainty villages, trim rose-fields, and foaming torrents; the strong love story, and the vigorous treatment of minor characters,—make a unique impression, and render the tale equally absorbing to old and young. The idiot Mouncho, in his devotion to Ognianoff, contributes some of the most telling strokes in the story; and there is other evidence that the author had read Shakespeare and Scott to some purpose.

Another episode puts the insurgents vividly before the reader. Not being allowed to carry arms, and consequently pitifully lacking in ammunition, the villagers are seized with the idea of constructing cannon from the hard wood of the cherry-tree. Several of these hollow trunks that were turned so confidently against the Turks, but cracked ignominiously when the first spark was applied to them, are still to be seen in the national museum at Sofia.

On the second day of October, 1895—exactly a quarter of a century having elapsed since the boy of twenty published his poem

‘The Pine-Tree,’—a jubilee was held at Sofia: the poet receiving in the building of the National Assembly the thanks and acclamations of his fellow-countrymen, as well as letters and greetings in verse from authors in other parts of Europe. At this writing, a portion of his latest work, ‘New Ground,’ has been translated into French.

Lucy Catlin Bull

THE PINE-TREE

Allegory of the Ancient Kingdom of Bulgaria

Below the great Balkan, a stone's-throw from Thrace,
Where the mountain, majestic and straight as a wall,
Lifts his terrible back—in a bird-haunted place
Where green boughs are waving, white torrents appall.

With yellowing marbles, with moldering eaves,
Mute rises the cloister, girt round with the hills
And mingling its gloom with the glimmer of leaves,
The newness of blossoms, the freshness of rills.

Without the high walls what commotion and whirr!
Within them how solemn, how startling the hush!
All is steeped in a slumber that nothing can stir—
Not the waterfall shattered to foam in its rush.

In that hallowed inclosure, above the quaint shrine,
With angel and martyr in halo and shroud,
Looms a giant-limbed tree—a magnificent pine,
Whose black summit is plunged in the soft summer cloud.

As the wings of an eagle are opened for flight,
As a cedar of Lebanon shields from the heat,
So he shoots out his branches to left and to right,
Till they shade every tomb in that tranquil retreat.

The monk with white beard saw him ever the same,—
Unaltered in grandeur, in height or in girth;
Nor can any one living declare when that frame
Was first lifted in air, or the root pierced the earth.

That mysterious root that has long ceased to grow,
Sunken deep in the soil,—who can tell where it ends?
That inscrutable summit what mortal can know?
Like a cloud, with the limitless azure it blends.

And perchance the old landmark, by ages unbent,
  Is sole witness to valor and virtue long past.
Peradventure he broods o'er each mighty event
  That once moved him to rapture or made him aghast.

And 'tis thus he lives on, meeting storm after storm
  With contempt and defiance — a stranger to dread.
Nor can summer or winter, that all things transform,
  Steal the plumes from his shaggy and resolute head.

From the crotches and tufts of those wide-waving boughs.
  Blithe birds by the hundred are pouring their lays;
There in utter seclusion their nestlings they house,
  Far from envy and hate passing halcyon days.

Last of all save the mountain, the Balkan's own son
  Takes the tinge of the sunset. A crown as of fire
First of all he receives from the new-risen one,
  And salutes his dear guest with the small feathered choir.

But alas! in old age, though with confident heart
  He yet springs toward the zenith, majestic and tall —
Since he too of a world full of peril is part,
  The same fate hath found him that overtakes all.

On a sinister night came the thunder's long roll;
  No cave of the mountain but echoed that groan.
All at once fell the storm upon upland and knoll
  With implacable fury aforetime unknown.

The fields were deserted, the valleys complained;
  The heavens grew lurid with flash after flash;
In the track of the tempest no creature remained —
  Only terror and gloom and the thunderbolt's crash.

As of old, the huge tree his assailant repays
  With intense indignation, with thrust after thrust;
Till uprooted, confounded, his whole length he lays,
  With a heart-rending cry of despair, in the dust.

As a warrior attacked without warning rebounds
  Undismayed from each stroke of his deadliest foe —
Then staggers and languishes, covered with wounds,
  Knowing well that his footing he soon must forego;

As he still struggles on in the enemy's grasp,
  Falling only in death, yielding only to fate

With a final convulsion, a single deep gasp,
  That at least he survive not his fallen estate,—

So the pine-tree, perceiving the end of his reign,
  Yet unsplintered, uncleft in that desperate strife,
Vouchsafed not to witness the victor's disdain,
  But with dignity straightway relinquished his life.

He is fallen! he lies there immobile, august;
  Full of years, full of scars, on the greensward he lies.
Till last evening how proudly his summit he thrust,
  To the wonder of all men, far into the skies.

And behold, as a conqueror closes the fray
  With one mortal stroke more to his down-trodden foe,
Then ignoring the conquest, all honors would pay,
  Shedding tears for the hero his hand hath brought low,—

Thus the whirlwind, forgetting his fury, grew dumb,
  Now that prone on the turf his antagonist lay;
And revering the victim his stroke had o'ercome,
  To profound lamentation and weeping gave way.

Translation of Lucy C. Bull.

THE SEWING-PARTY AT ALTINOVO

From ‹Under the Yoke›

OGNIANOFF now turned back towards Altinovo, a village which lay in the western corner of the valley. It was a two-hours' journey; but his horse was exhausted and the road was bad, so that he only just reached the village before dark, pursued right up to the outskirts by the famished howls of the wolves.

He entered by the Bulgarian quarter (the village was a mixed one, containing both Turks and Bulgarians), and soon stopped before old Tsanko's door.

Tsanko was a native of Klissoura, but had long ago taken up his abode in the village. He was a simple, kindly peasant, and a warm patriot. The apostles often slept at his house. He received Ognianoff with open arms.

"It is a piece of luck, your coming to me. We've got a sewing-party on to-night—you can have a good look at our girls.

You won't find the time heavy on your hands, I'll be bound," said Tsanko with a smile, as he showed the way in.

Ognianoff hastened to tell him that he was being pursued, and for what reason.

"Yes, yes, I know all about it," said Tsanko: "you don't suppose just because our village is a bit out of the way, that we know nothing of what goes on outside?"

"But shan't I be putting you out?"

"Don't you mind, I tell you. You must look out among the girls to-night for one to carry the flag," laughed Tsanko; "there —you can see them all from this window, like a king."

Ognianoff was in a small dark closet, the window of which, covered with wooden trellis-work, looked on to the large common room: here the sewing-party was already assembling. It was a meeting of the principal girls of the village; the object being to assist in making the trousseau for Tsanko's daughter Donka. The fire burned brightly and lighted up the walls, which boasted no ornament save a print of St. Ivan of Rilo, and the bright glazed dishes on the shelves. The furniture—as in most well-to-do villagers' houses—consisted of a water-butt, a wardrobe, a shelf, and the great cupboard which contained all Tsanko's household goods. All the guests, both male and female, were seated on the floor, which was covered with skins and carpets. Besides the light of the fire there were also two petroleum lamps burning—a special luxury in honor of the occasion.

It was long since Ognianoff had been present at a gathering of this kind,—a curious custom sanctioned by antiquity. From his dark recess he watched with interest the simple scenes of the still primitive village life. The door opened, and Tsanko's wife came to him: she was a buxom and talkative dame, also from Klissoura. She sat down by Ognianoff's side, and began to point out to him the most remarkable girls present, with the necessary details.

"Do you see that fat rosy-cheeked girl there? That's Staïka Chonina. See what a sad, sad look Ivan Kill-the-Bear gives her now and again. He barks for her like a sheep-dog when he wants to make her laugh. She's very industrious, quick-witted, and cleanly. Only she ought to marry at once, poor girl,—she's getting so fat: she'll be thinner after marriage. It's just the opposite of your town girls. The girl to the left of her is Tsvéta Prodanova: she is in love with the lad over there with his mustache sticking out like a skewer. She's a lively one for you — see her eyes in every corner of the room at once; but she's a good girl. That's Draganoff's Tsvéta by her side; and next to her Raïka, the Pope's daughter. I'd rather have those two than twenty of your fine ladies from Philippopolis. Do you see their white throats, just like ducks? Why, I once caught my Tsanko saying he'd give his vineyard at Mal Tepe, just to be allowed to kiss one of them on the chin! Didn't I just box his ears for him, the vagabond! Do you see that girl to the right of fat Staïka? That's Kara Velio's daughter: she's a great swell; five young fellows have already been after her, but her father wouldn't have anything to say to them. He's keeping her for somebody, the old weasel — you know he looks just like a weasel. Ivan Nedelioff'll have her, or I'll bite my tongue out. There's Rada Milkina: she sings like the nightingale on our plum-tree — but she's a lazybones, between ourselves. I'd rather have Dimka Todorova, standing over there by the shelf: there's a blooming rose for you! If I was a bachelor I'd propose to her at once. Why don't you take her yourself? That's the Pééffs' girl standing by our Donka. She's a pretty girl, and industrious into the bargain — so they say she's as good as our Donka. She's got a sweet voice, like Rada Milkina, and laughs like a swallow twittering: you listen to her."

As she stood there by Boïcho in the dark, she reminded him of the scene in the 'Divina Commedia' where Beatrice, at the gate of hell, points out to Dante one by one the condemned, and tells him their history.

Ognianoff listened more or less attentively: he was entirely absorbed by the picture, and cared little for the explanations. The bolder among the girls jested with the lads, flirted with them archly, and laughed merrily the while. They were answered by the deep guffaws of the youths, who looked shyly across at the weaker sex. Jests, taunts, and chaff followed in one continual flow: loud laughter was called forth by jokes with a double meaning, which sometimes brought the hot blush to the girls' cheeks. Tsanko alone took no part in the merry-making. His wife was busy with the stew-pan, where the supper was preparing. As for Donka, she couldn't stay still for a moment.

"Come, you've chaffed each other enough now: suppose you give us a song," cried the housewife, as she left Boïcho and returned to her saucepans on the fire. "Now then, Rada, Stanka, sing something and put the young men to shame. Young men are not worth a brass button nowadays: they can't sing."

Rada and Stanka did not wait to be asked twice. They at once began a song, which was taken up by all those girls who could sing; these at once formed into two choruses: the first sang one verse, and then waited while the second repeated it. The better singers were in the first choir, the others repeating the verse in a lower key.

The following are the words of the song they sang:—

"Well-a-day! the youthful couple; well-a-day! they fell in love;
Well-a-day! in love they'd fallen; well-a-day! from earliest youth.
Well-a-day! they met each other; well-a-day! last night they met.
Well-a-day! all in the darkness; well-a-day! just down the street.
Well-a-day! the silver moonlight; well-a-day! shone down on them.
Well-a-day! the stars were twinkling; well-a-day! within the sky.
Yet, well-a-day! the youthful couple; well-a-day! they're sitting still.
Well-a-day! yes, still they're sitting; well-a-day! in loving talk.
Well-a-day! her jug of water; well-a-day! it's frozen hard.
Well-a-day! his oaken cudgel; well-a-day! how long it's grown.
But, well-a-day! the youthful couple; well-a-day! they're sitting yet!"

When the song came to an end, the youths were loud in applause: it appealed to every one of them; its pleasing refrain brought up memories of past experience. As for Ivan Kill-the-Bear, he was devouring Staïka Chonina with his eyes: he was deeply in love with her.

"That's the kind of song to sing over again—ay, and to act all day long!" he cried in his deep bass voice.

All the girls laughed, and many an arch look was cast at Kill-the-Bear.

He was a perfect mountain of a man, of gigantic stature and herculean strength, with a big, bony face, but not over bright. However, he was great at singing; that is to say, his voice corresponded with his size. He now became cross, and withdrew silently behind the girls, where he suddenly barked like an old sheep-dog. The girls started in terror at first, and then laughed at him, and the bolder ones among them began to tease him: one of them sang, mockingly:—

"Ivan, you bright-hued turtle-dove,
Ivan, you slender poplar."

Staïka added:—

«Ivan, you shaggy old she-bear,
Ivan, you lanky clothes-prop!»

More giggling and laughter followed. Ivan became furious. He stared in dumb bewilderment at the rosy-cheeked Staïka Chonina, who mocked so unkindly her fervent adorer; he opened a mouth like a boa-constrictor's, and roared out:—

«Said Peïka's aunt one day to her,—
'Why, Peïka girl, why, Peïka girl,
The people freely talk of you!
The people, all the neighbors, say
That you've become so fat and full,
That you're so plump and fleshy now,
All through your uncle's shepherd lad.'—
'O aunty dear, O darling aunt,
Let people freely talk of me!
Let people, all the neighbors, say
That if I'm fat and fleshy now,
If I've become so plump and full,
It's from my father's wheaten bread,
My father's white and wheaten bread;
For while I knead it in the trough,
A basket-full of grapes I pluck,
And drink a jar of red, red wine.'»

Staïka blushed at this bitter innuendo: her red cheeks became as fiery as if she had dyed them in cochineal. The spiteful giggles of the other girls pierced her to the heart. Some with assumed simplicity asked:—

«Why, how ever can one pick grapes and drink wine at the same time? The song must be all wrong.»

«Why, of course, either the song's wrong or else the girl's wrong,» answered another.

This cutting criticism still further enraged Staïka. She threw a crushing look at the triumphant Ivan, and sang in a voice that quivered with rage:—

«'O Peïka, brighter than the poppy,
Is all your needlework so fine,
And all my many, many visits,
Are all of these to be in vain?
Come, Peïka, won't you have me, dear?'—

'Why, Yonko, why, you filthy drudge,
Could Peïka ever fall in love
With such a swineherd as yourself?
A swineherd and a cattle drover—
Some wealthy farmer's filthy drudge?
She'd put you down before the door,
The little door behind the house;
That when she passes in and out
To fetch the calves and heifers in,
If she should chance to soil her shoes,
She'd wipe them clean upon your back.'»

It was a crushing repartee to a savage attack.

Staïka now looked proudly round her. Her shaft had struck home. Ivan Kill-the-Bear stood motionless, as if transfixed, with staring eyes. A loud peal of laughter greeted his discomfiture. The whole party was gazing curiously at him. Tears started to his eyes from very shame and wounded vanity. The spectators laughed still louder. The mistress of the house became angry.

« What's the meaning of all this, girls? Is this the way to behave with the lads, instead of being kind and pleasant to one another, as you ought to? Staïka—Ivan—you ought to be cooing together like a pair of turtle-doves.»

« It's only lovers who quarrel,» said Tsanko in a conciliatory tone.

Ivan Kill-the-Bear rose and went out angrily, as if to protest against these words.

« Like loves like,» averred Neda Liagovitcha.

« Well, Neda, God loves a good laugher,» said Kono Goran, Kill-the-Bear's cousin.

« Now, boys, sing us some old haïdoud song, to put a little life into us,» said Tsanko. The lads sang in chorus:—

«Alas for poor Stoyan, alas!
Two ambushes they laid for him,
But in the third they captured him.
The cruel ropes they've fastened round him—
They've bound his strong and manly arms.
Alas! they've carried poor Stoyan
To Erin's house, the village pope,
And Rouja, a stepdaughter, too;
But Rouja sat and milked the cow
Beside the little garden gate,

While they were sweeping in the yard,
And gayly cried the sisters twain—
'Ha! ha! Stoyan,' they cried to him:
'To-morrow morn they'll hang you up
Before the palace of the king,—
You'll dangle for the queen to see,
And all the princes and princesses.'
But Stoyan softly said to Rouja:—
'Dear Rouja, you the pope's stepdaughter,
It's not my life I care about,
It's not for the bright world I mourn,—
A brave man never weeps or mourns:
But yet, I beg you, Rouja dear,
Oh! let them put a clean shirt on me,
And let them brush and deck my hair;
That's all I ask for, Rouja dear.
For when a man's led out to die,
His shirt should spotless be, and white,
His hair should be arrayed and trim.'»

Ognianoff listened with secret excitement to the close of the song.

« This Stoyan,» he thought, « is the very type of the legendary Bulgarian haïdoud, with his calm courage in facing death. Not a word of sorrow, of despair, or even of hope. He only wants to die looking his best. Ah! if this heroical fatalism has only passed into the Bulgarian of to-day, I shall be quite easy in mind as to the end of our struggle. That's the struggle I seek for—that's the strength I want: to know how to die—that's half the battle.»

Just then the kavala, or shepherd's reed-pipes, struck up. Their sound, at first low and melancholy, swelled gradually and rose higher and higher; the eyes of the pipers flashed, their faces flushed with excitement, the clear notes rang out and filled the night with their weird mountain melody. They summoned up the spirit of the Balkan peaks and gorges, they recalled the darkness of the mountain glades, the rustling of the leaves at noon while the sheep are resting, the scent of the corn-flower, the echoes of the rocks, and the cool, sweet air of the valleys. The reed-pipe is the harp of the Bulgarian mountains and plains.

All were now listening enchanted as they drank in the familiar and friendly sounds of the poetic music. Tsanko and his wife, standing with clasped hands by the fire, listened as if entranced. But the most affected of all was Ognianoff, who could scarcely keep from applauding.

The brisk conversation and merry laughter soon broke out again. But Ognianoff began to listen to what was being said, for he heard his name mentioned. Petr Ovcharoff, Raïchin, Spirdonoff, Ivan Ostenoff, and a few others were talking of the coming insurrection.

"I'm ready for the fun now; I'm only waiting for my revolver from Philippopolis. I've sent the money, 170 piastres. That's the price of three rams," said Petr Ovcharoff, the president of the local committee.

"Yes, but we don't know when the flag's to be raised. Some say we shall blood our knives at the Annunciation, others at St. Gregory's Day, and Uncle Bojil says not till the end of May," said Spirdonoff, a handsome, well-built lad.

"It'll be somewhere about the coming of the cuckoo, when the woods are getting green; but I'm ready now,—they've only to give the word."

"Well, well: our Stara Planina has sheltered many a brave fellow before now; it'll shelter us too," said Ivan Ostenoff.

"Petr, didn't you say the teacher [Ognianoff] had killed two of them? There's a plucky one for you."

"When's he going to pay us a visit? I want to kiss the hand that polished them off," asked Raïchin.

"He's got a start of us, has the teacher, but we must try and catch him up. I know something of the game myself," answered Ivan Ostenoff.

Ivan Ostenoff was a bold youth, and a good shot as well. Popular rumor ascribed the death of Deli Ahmed last year to him; and the Turks had long tried to get hold of him, but so far ineffectually.

At supper Ognianoff's health was drunk.

"God grant that we may soon see him here safe and sound. Take an example from him, boys," said Tsanko, as he swallowed his wine.

"I'll bet any one whatever he likes," said Tsanko's wife impatiently, "that teacher'll be here the first thing to-morrow, like a hawk."

"What are you talking of, Boulka Tsankovitsa? Why, I'm off to K—— to-morrow," said Raïchin regretfully. "If he comes you must keep him for Christmas, and we'll enjoy ourselves together."

« What's all that noise outside ? » cried Tsanko, leaving his wine.

In truth, men's and women's voices were heard making an uproar outside. Tsanko and his wife ran out. The guests rose to follow. Just then the mistress of the house rushed in, in great excitement, and cried: —

« Well, that business is finished. God prosper it.»

« What ? What ? »

« Kill-the-Bear's carried off Staïka! »

Every one started with surprise at the news.

« Carried her off, he has, the lad, on his shoulder, as you would a lamb on St. Gregory's Day; now they're at his house.»

Her hearers began to laugh.

« Well, what of it ? That's why he went away so early with his cousin Goran.»

« He laid in wait for her by the door,» continued Boulka Tsankovitsa, « and carried her off. I'm sorry for them both. Who'd have thought it of Kill-the-Bear ? »

« Well, well, they're a pretty pair,» said some one.

« She's just like a fat little Servian pig, and he's a Hungarian bull,» laughed another.

« God bless 'em both; we'll drink cherry brandy with them to-morrow,» said Tsanko.

« Yes, and I shall claim my perquisite,» said his wife. « I must have my embroidered sleeves, because the match was arranged at my house.»

Soon after, all the guests left in high glee.

Tsanko hastened to Ognianoff in the dark closet.

« Well, Boïcho, how did you like our party ? »

« Oh, it was wonderful, delightful, Tsanko.»

« Did you take down the words of the songs ? »

« How could I ? There's no light to write by.»

In came Tsanko's wife with a candle in her hand.

« There's some one knocking at the door,» said she.

« That'll be some one from Staïka, most likely. Perhaps she wants our Donka to go to her: you must send her.»

But Donka came in and said that there were two zaptiés outside, brought by old Deïko, the village mayor.

« The Devil take them — zaptiés, old Deïko, and all! Where am I to put the swine ? They've not come after you,» he said to

Ognianoff reassuringly, « but you'd better hide. Wife, just show the teacher where to go.»

And Tsanko went out. Soon he brought in the two zaptiés, muffled up in their cloaks and drenched with snow. They were furious.

« What do you mean by keeping us an hour at the door, you cuckold?» cried the first, a one-eyed zaptié, as he shook the snow from his cloak.

« You left us freezing outside while you were making up your mind to open,» grumbled the other, a short, stout man.

Tsanko muttered some excuse.

« What are you muttering about? Go and kill a chicken for us, and get some eggs fried in butter at once!»

Tsanko tried to say something. The one-eyed zaptié burst out:—

« None of your talk, ghiaour: go and tell your wife to get supper ready at once. Do you suppose we're going to finish up your d—d tart-crumbs and nutshells for you?» he said with a contemptuous look at the remains of the little feast, not yet cleared up.

Tsanko moved helplessly toward the door to carry out his orders. The short one called after him:—

« Stop a minute: what have you done with the girls?»

« They went home long ago: it's late,» answered Tsanko, trembling all over.

« Just you go and fetch them back to have supper with us and pour out our raki. What do you mean by sending them home?»

Tsanko gazed at him in terror.

« Where's your daughter?»

« She's gone to bed, Aga.»

« Make her get up to wait on us,» said the one-eyed zaptié, taking off his boots to dry them at the fire, while the water dripped from them, and a cloud of steam rose.

The mayor just then came in and stood humbly by the door.

« You infernal pig! you've led us round twenty houses, knocking at door after door, like beggars;—where have you hidden your—»

And he called the girls by a foul epithet.

The Bulgarians remained silent. They were used to this. Centuries of slavery had taught them the proverb, so degrading for humanity: « The sword does not strike the bowed head.» Tsanko only prayed Heaven that they might not molest his daughter.

« Look here,» asked the one-eyed zaptié: « are you preparing for a rebellion ? »

Tsanko boldly denied the charge.

« Well, what's this doing here, then ? » asked the short one, taking up Petr Ovcharoff's long knife, which had been forgotten on the floor.

« Oh! you're not preparing for a rebellion, aren't you ? » asked the first, with a diabolical smile.

« No, Aga, we're peaceful subjects of his Majesty,» answered Tsanko, trying to keep calm: « the knife must have been left behind by one of the guests.»

« Whose is it ? »

« I don't know. »

The zaptiés began examining the blade, which was engraved with letters inlaid with gold, surrounded by a fancy pattern.

« What do these letters mean ? » they asked Tsanko.

He looked at the knife: on one side there was a wreath of flowers engraved, towards the blunt edge, containing the words « Liberty or Death »; the other side bore the owner's name.

« It's only an ornament,» said Tsanko.

The one-eyed zaptié struck him in the face with his muddy boot.

« Ghiaour! Do you suppose I'm blind because I've got only one eye ? »

Tsanko's reply had aroused their suspicions.

« Mayor, just come here. »

The mayor came in with a cake of bread on a brass platter, which he was bringing to be baked in Tsanko's oven. He trembled when he saw the naked dagger in the zaptié's hand.

« Read this! »

The mayor looked at it, and drew himself up in dismay.

« I can't make it out properly, Aga! »

The short one took his Circassian whip. The lash hissed in the air and curled twice round the mayor's neck. A stream of blood flowed from his cheek.

« You're all a set of traitors.»

The mayor wiped away the blood silently.

« Read it out, or I'll stick the knife into your throat! » cried the zaptié. The bewildered mayor saw there was no help for it: he must bow before them.

« Petr Ovcharoff, » he read with assumed hesitation.

« Do you know him? »

« He belongs to our village. »

« Is that the fellow they call Petr the shepherd? » asked the one-eyed one, who evidently knew a little Bulgarian.

« Yes, Aga, » said the mayor, handing him the knife, with a silent prayer of thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity that the terrible words on the other side had been passed over. But he went too fast.

« Now see what it says on the other side, » said the zaptié.

The mayor bent in abject terror over the other side. He hesitated for some time. But when he saw that the short zaptié was getting his whip ready again, he cried:—

« It says 'Liberty or Death,' Aga. »

The one-eyed zaptié started. « What! liberty, eh? » he said, smiling ominously.

« Who is it who makes these knives? Where's Petr the shepherd? »

« Where should he be, Aga? At home, of course. »

« Go and fetch him. »

The mayor moved off.

« Wait: I'll come with you, you fool! »

And the short zaptié took up his cloak and went out with him.

« That's right, Youssouf Aga: this shepherd seems a thorough brigand, » said the other.

Meanwhile Tsanko passed into the kitchen, where his wife was preparing the supper, cursing the Turks as she did so: « May God destroy them — may he cut them off root and branch — may the pestilence fall on them and rot their bones — may they die of poison. To think that I should be cooking meat and butter for them just before Christmas! What brought the accursed heathen here, to terrify and destroy us? »

« Donka, dear, » said Tsanko to his daughter, who stood, pale and terrified, at the door, « you'd better slip out by the back way, and go and sleep at your uncle's. »

«And what does Deïko mean by bringing them here again? It was only last week he brought us two, » murmured his wife.

« What's he to do, poor fellow? » said Tsanko. « He took them everywhere. They wanted to come here — they'd heard the songs. As it is he's had five or six cuts of the whip. »

Tsanko went back to the one-eyed zaptié.

« Chorbaji, where have you been to? Just bring a little salad and some raki. »

« The shepherd's not there, » cried the short zaptié at that moment, as he returned with the mayor.

« Well, we must find the rascally Komita, if we have to turn the whole village upside down, » said the one-eyed man, drinking.

« What do you say to giving the old boy another taste of the stick? » asked the short one in a low voice, adding something in a whisper. His comrade winked with his only eye in assent.

« Mayor, go and fetch the father here: we want to ask him something — and fill this at the same time, » said Youssouf Aga, handing him the empty raki bottle.

« It's too late for that, Aga: the shop's shut. »

The only reply was a blow in the face from the one-eyed zaptié. He was naturally a little more humane than the other; but drink, or the desire for it, maddened him in a moment.

A quarter of an hour afterwards old Stoïko appeared. He was about fifty years of age, with a sharp and intelligent countenance, expressive of determination and obstinacy.

« Stoïko, tell me where your son is, — you know where you've hidden him, — or it will be the worse for you. »

As the one-eyed zaptié said this, he poured out and gulped down a glass of raki. His eye flashed as he did so. Then he handed the glass to his comrade.

« I don't know where he is, Aga, » replied the old man.

« You do, ghiaour; you know quite well, » cried the zaptié, enraged.

The old man again repeated his denial.

« You know, and you'll tell us, or we'll pull out your eye-teeth for you; and if you won't say then, I'll tie you behind my horse, and you'll come with us to-morrow, » roared the infuriated zaptié.

« You can do what you like to me — I've only got one life, » answered the old man firmly.

« Go over there and think it over a little; then we'll talk to you again, » the one-eyed zaptié said with pretended gentleness.

Their object was to extract a bribe from old Stoïko, to be suggested to him by the mayor. It was brigandage of the worst description, but they wished to give it the appearance of a voluntary gift: it was the system usually followed in such cases.

But old Stoïko did not move.

They looked at each other, astonished at his firmness, and cast ferocious glances at the old man.

« Did you hear what I said, you old fool? » cried the one-eyed zaptié.

« I've nothing to think about — let me go home, » he answered hoarsely.

The zaptiés could not contain themselves.

« Mayor, throw the old fool down, » cried the one-eyed ruffian, seizing his kourbash or Circassian whip.

The mayor and Tsanko begged for mercy for the old man.

The only reply was a kick which felled Stoïko to the ground. Then blows followed fast on his body. Old Stoïko groaned heavily for some time, then became silent: he had fainted; his forehead was drenched with a cold sweat,— he was worn out by his day's work.

They undressed him to bring him to his senses.

« When he comes to himself, let me know; — I'll make him speak. »

« For God's sake, Hajji Aga, I entreat you, have pity on the poor old man! He can't stand any more pain,— he'll die, » said Tsanko entreatingly.

« Long live the Sultan, you rebel! » cried the short zaptié in a passion. « You deserve to be hanged yourself for harboring rebels in your house; you're very likely hiding the shepherd here somewhere. Let's search the house! »

Tsanko's face fell involuntarily. Although frenzied with drink, the one-eyed zaptié saw his confusion. He turned at once to the short one:—

« Youssouf Aga, there's something wrong here — let's search the ghiaour's house. » And he arose.

« At your service, » said Tsanko hoarsely, showing the way with a lantern.

He led them all over the house, leaving the closet to the last. Finally he lighted them there too. In the blackened ceiling there was a trap-door which led to the rafters, and so outside on to the roof. When it was closed it could not be noticed.

Tsanko knew that Ognianoff had climbed up through it to the rafters and replaced the cover. So he led the Turks in with the utmost confidence.

His first glance was towards the ceiling. What was his surprise to find the trap-door open!

Tsanko remained petrified where he stood. The Turks searched the closet.

« Where does that opening lead to? »

« To the rafters, » muttered Tsanko. His legs trembled under him, and he had to cling to the wall for support.

The short zaptié noticed his terror.

« Just give a light here while I get up, will you? » he said; but a sudden thought crossed his mind, and he called to his comrade:—

« Hassan Aga, you're taller than I am: get on the mayor's back. »

Hassan Aga knew no fear when he had got his skinful; drink made a hero of him. He at once climbed up over the mayor's shoulders.

« Now then, bring the light, confound you! »

Tsanko, white as a sheet, handed him the light mechanically.

The zaptié first held the lantern in front of him, then put his head within the opening. From the motion of his body one could see he was searching with the light on every side.

At last he reappeared, jumped down, and said:—

« Who is it you've been hiding there? »

Tsanko looked blankly at him. He did not know what answer to give. He had suffered so much that evening that he had almost lost his senses; his thoughts became confused. The question was repeated: he stammered out some meaningless reply.

« The rebel will give a proper answer at Klissoura. There's a better prison there; he can stop here for the night. »

And the zaptiés locked him up in the dark and chilly closet.

Tsanko was so overwhelmed with terror and confusion that it was some minutes before he could collect his thoughts. He clasped his head with both hands, as if to retain his presence of mind. He was lacking in determination, and suffering had at once crushed him. He sobbed and groaned in despair.

There was a knock at the door, and Deïko's voice was heard:—

« What are you going to do now, Tsanko? »

« I don't know, Deïko. Tell me what's best.»

« Come, you know the Turks' weakness. You must give them something; it's the only way to get out of it: else they'll drag you from one court-house to another till you're utterly ruined. Poor old Stoïko could have spared himself this with a trifle. Give, Tsanko! give 'em your white silver to keep off black sorrow.»

His wife came too, weeping bitterly:—

« Let's give them what we can! Never mind, Tsanko: it's the only way to get out of the murderers' hands. They've killed poor old Stoïko. Dear, dear! to think I should live to see it.»

« But what are we to give, wife? You know we haven't any money.»

« Let's give the necklace!»

« What! Donka's necklace, with the coins?»

« Yes, yes! it's all we have,—it's the only way to get rid of them. Why, they're asking for Donka now—the cursed brutes!»

« Do what God thinks best, wife. I'm all in a muddle,» muttered Tsanko from his prison.

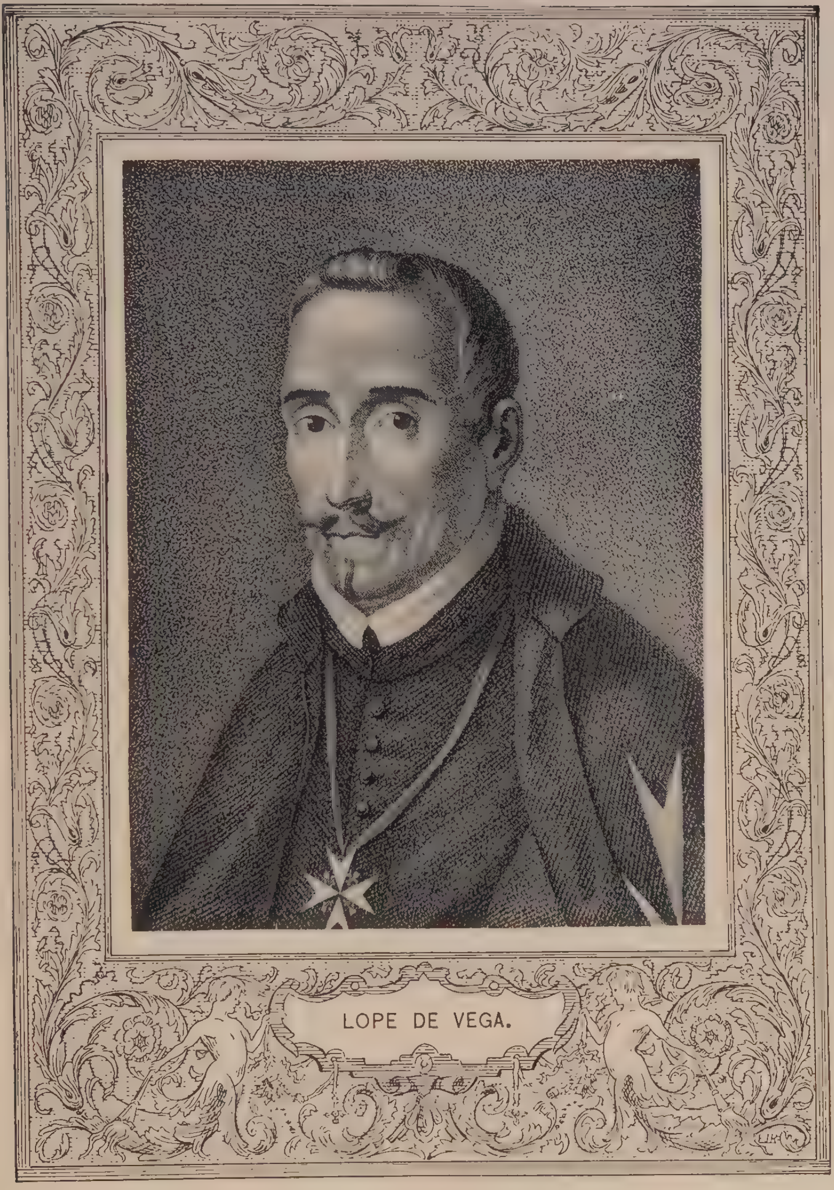
His wife and Deïko went away.

Soon after, a light shone through the chinks in the boards of the closet, and the door was unlocked.

« Come out, Tsanko: you're free,» said Deïko. « The Agas were good fellows after all. They've given you back the knife as well; so there's no cause for fear. You've got off cheap.»

And bending to his ear, he whispered low:—

« It can't last much longer: either they'll finish us off, or we must them. This life can't go on like this.»



LOPE DE VEGA.

LOPE DE VEGA

(1562–1635)

BY MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN

The comedies of Lope de Vega — of which three hundred still exist, but difficult to obtain — are worth serious study by the sociologists, and the modern maker of plays who may need to revive a jaded imagination. The material used in these dramas is enormous; it is rich, suggestive, often rare and poetical. Sismondi (‹Literature of the South of Europe›) says of Lope:—

> «In order to have written 2,200 theatrical pieces, he must every eight days, from the beginning to the end of his life, have given to the public a new play of about three thousand verses; and in these eight days he must not only have found the time necessary for invention and writing, but also for making the historical researches into customs and manners on which the play is founded,— to consult Tacitus, for example, in order to compose his ‹Nero›: while the fruits of his spare time were twenty-one volumes in quarto of poetry, among which are five epic poems.»

He was called the Phœnix of Poets; and Calderon justly named him «the prodigy of nature» (*el monstruo de naturalelza*). The fecundity of Alexandre Dumas *père* is in our time a matter of wonder, in spite of the fact that he had co-laborers; the ease with which Lope de Vega turned out comedies, tragi-comedies, tragedies, moralities, *autos sacramentales*, interludes, and even epics, beats the very record of the author of ‹Monte Cristo.› Lope was pressed into continuous action by the hungry theatrical managers, and a continual flood of gold poured into his caskets; but like Dumas the elder, he was generous and extravagant. It is easy to understand the non-morality of Dumas, who seems to have been a creature of emotion and imagination; and one feels that the reader who could take Aramis or D'Artagnan so seriously as to copy their moral laxity, must not only be as unstable as water, but already corrupt. In the case of Lope we find, especially in the «cloak and sword» dramas, an amazing disregard for the crime of murder, and the constant assumption that «love excuses all things.» And yet he was intensely religious and moral in those dramatic legends of the saints, and in those sacred spectacles called «autos,» which were usually performed in honor of the Blessed Sacrament on the Feast of Corpus Christi. There is in his ‹Lives and Legends of the Saints,› and in his ‹Autos,› the same strange mixture of mythological and Christian personages, which, even under the magic touch of his friend Calderon, shocks us; but his essential Christianity would satisfy even the most exacting. Frederick Bouterwek ('History of Spanish Literature'), from whom Sismondi has borrowed largely, tells us that Lope, though wildly romantic in his spirit, was a realist in his method; he presented «the morals and manners of his time»: and when one has read the memoirs of De Retz,—Dumas's «coadjutor,»—one may explain the modern king of romancers in the same way. But Lope de Vega, who was in holy orders when he did most of his dramatic work, must have either felt that he might exhibit anything on the stage in which God permitted the Devil to have a hand, or he looked upon his productions as without the teaching quality. The dramas (the term «comedy» is more elastic in Spanish than in English)—of manners, of the cloak and sword—are not constantly licentious as those of the Restoration period are; but Shakespeare is an ascetic and the sternest of moralists in comparison with Lope as a depicter of the life of the sixteenth century, with whom love always gets the better of duty. According to the law of society, a man might kill his wife for infidelity, but his intrigues with any wandering damsel might be regarded leniently, even with amusement. And the virtues of the erratic gentlewomen in many of the plays pass for perfect virtue, unless by some mischance their declension is publicly exposed. The king, in one of the heroic comedies, 'The Certain for the Doubtful,' resolves to kill his brother because he believes that Don Henry has possessed Doña Juana. He coolly says:—

«This night will I assassinate Don Henry,
And he being dead, I will espouse thee. Then
Thou never canst compare his love with mine.
'Tis true that while he lives I can't espouse thee,
Seeing that my dishonor lives in him
Who hath usurped this place reserved for me.»

This peculiar and delicate sense of honor, which demands a brother's murder to keep it stainless, may well make modern men marvel. Still it is not more absurd than the Continental sense of honor, which asks a duel for a misstep, requiring blood for an injured corn!

In analyzing some of the dramas, one is rather more surprised that the Church showered honors on Lope than that the Spanish clerics—as George Ticknor clearly points out—objected strenuously in the beginning to the secularization of the drama, which commenced as a conveyance for religious instruction. It had been in fact a theological object lesson, which in the «autos» it still continued to be. In the third part of the sixteenth century, the division of the Spanish drama into «Divine and human» was first made. The «human» comedies were either «comedias heroyeas» or «comedias de capa y Espodas»; the «Divine» comedies either «Vidas de Santos» or «Autos Sacramentales.» There were prologues called «loas,» and «intermeses,» — which were, when dance and song were introduced, called «saynetes.» «Coplas» were short strophes sung during the saraband, or other dance.

Lope de Vega's invention was inexhaustible, and he is seldom uninteresting. He pushes one breathless from complication to complication; he has in perfection the art of conversation; he rushes from episode to episode with the agility of Dumas. He is not above cutting with one blow of his sword the Gordian knot he has tied; and some of his climaxes are as sudden as the conversion of the wicked brother and the marriage of Celia in 'As You Like It.'

In fact, there is much similarity between the methods of the Spanish and the English drama. And Lope *made* the methods of the Spanish drama, though he did not invent them. He disregarded unities and classic traditions; he mixed up grave with gay, the horrible and the ludicrous, in a manner which afterwards horrified the French critics, and drove them to outbursts as violent as that of Voltaire against Shakespeare. The arrangement of scenes is dependent not, as in French, on the entrance of a new personage, but on a change of locality. The influence of Lope de Vega was far-reaching. France felt it upon Corneille and Molière and groups of lesser dramatists; Italy, Germany, and England were saturated with it. It has been said, perhaps with a little exaggeration, that Lope de Vega made the stage of Europe romantic by his dramatized novels; thus undoing the work of Cervantes, which was to moderate romanticism. So quickly were the dramas of Lope composed, that in diction they are often crude. Thrown together at white heat, they have the fire still in them after a lapse of centuries. Of the thirty that Sismondi read, ten or twelve are easily obtainable; and any of them will prove that Lope had wonderful talent. A study of them will not give an insight into dramatic laws, but it will greatly help the social psychologist. Complete editions of Lope de Vega's works are very rare; the original editions most rare. He has not had the good fortune of Calderon in the way of English translators, but he deserves it. He is full of poetry and patriotism: the hastiest of his pieces answers to the description of the typical Russian noble of the time of Catharine,—«all splendor without, all squalor within;» but the lyrical splendor is always there, though the poverty of thought is evident upon close examination. Lope de Vega at his worst and best is Spain of the sixteenth century,—grand, superb in the Latin sense,—poor, glorious, coarse, faithful, and sublime. He invented an *olla podrida* in which one finds dropped rubies that are priceless and the herbs of the field,—all incongruities,—side by side! His metres alone are worth careful analysis: they are of Spain Spanish.

All critics agree in pronouncing valueless his epics: ‘Jerusalem Conquered’; ‘The Beauty of Angelica’; ‘The Tragic Crown’—Mary Stuart the heroine; one on Circe and the «Dragontea,» in which Queen Elizabeth's favorite pirate, Drake, is made Satanic. Satires, sonnets, novels (among them ‘The Stranger in his Own Country’), and compositions of all kinds, appeared from his pen, making twenty-five large volumes.

The most characteristic of Lope's comedies—this, however, must be said with all possible reserves—are ‘The Widow of Valencia’ and ‘The Peasant Girl of Xetalfi.’ These are well known because Bouterwek has analyzed them. The heroic comedies, ‘The Discreet Revenge’ and ‘The Battlements of Toro,’ have been analyzed by both Bouterwek and Sismondi,—to which George Ticknor in his ‘History of Spanish Literature’ has added admirable comments.

To appreciate the amazing energy of Lope de Vega, one must glance at his biography. He—born De Vega Carpio—appeared on this world's stage at Madrid, in 1562. He was two years younger than Shakespeare, and fifteen years younger than his rival dramatist Cervantes. His parents were poor and noble, not unusual in Spain. They began his education well, but they died early; and it was completed through the kindness of the Bishop of Avila. While secretary to the Duke of Alva, he married. A duel and exile, followed by the death of his wife, induced him to join the Invincible Armada. The Armada failed; but Lope never lost his hatred of the islanders who had defeated it. He reached Spain in safety, took up the quiet trade of secretary again, and married again. On the death of his second wife he received holy orders. Henceforth he devoted himself entirely to literature.

Lope de Vega was certainly not the hero of Browning's ‘As Seen by a Contemporary.’ He did not pass through his Spanish town unnoted. On the contrary, he was praised by all classes; a celebrity of the first order. Pope Urban VIII. showered every possible mark of regard upon him. Both populace and nobility hailed him as the «Spanish Phœnix.» When he died in 1635, both Church and State united to honor him with ceremonies worthy of a king.

The main fault of modern criticism is that it lacks full sympathy. Lope de Vega and his time will never be understood until they are judged by an English writer who for the moment can put himself in the place of a man who cannot be judged by the standard of nineteenth-century opinions and morals. And the critic who does this will be repaid by the gratitude of those who long for the key of that splendid civilization which gave color to the genius of Shakespeare and Corneille.

Maurice Francis Egan

SANCHO THE BRAVE

From the ‹Estrella de Sevilla›

[The King of Castile sees Estrella, called for her beauty the Star of Seville, during a visit which he makes to that city. and becomes enamored of her. He summons her brother, Busto Tabera, to the palace, and offers to confer on him various dignities and honors; which Tabera's independence of spirit, and later his suspicions of the King's motives, make him slow to accept. The same night the King, with the connivance of a slave-girl, obtains entrance to Tabera's house during the latter's absence; but is surprised at the moment of his entrance by Tabera, who returns unexpectedly. Tabera challenges the King; and dissatisfied with his answers, draws upon him. The King, to avoid fighting, reveals himself; but Tabera refuses to credit his word, and the King is compelled to draw in self-defense. The noise brings the servants, with lights, to the scene; and in the confusion the King escapes.

Irritated and humiliated by what has passed, the King sends for Sancho Ortiz, and requires him to avenge his outraged honor on a man who has been guilty of the crime of lèse-majesté, and whose name is written in a folded paper which he hands Ortiz. At the same time the King hands Ortiz another paper, relieving him of responsibility for the deed. This paper Ortiz destroys, saying that honorable men require no bond to hold them to their plighted word. On opening the other paper, after leaving the King, Sancho finds to his dismay that the name written in it is that of Tabera, his dearest friend, and the brother of Estrella, to whom he is betrothed. After a cruel struggle with himself, he provokes a quarrel with Tabera and kills him. Estrella petitions the King to deliver up to her for punishment the slayer of her brother. The King grants her prayer, hoping meantime to save Sancho's life without disclosing his own instrumentality in Tabera's death. Estrella goes veiled to the prison, and with the King's ring which he has given her, obtains Sancho's release. Leading him out of the prison, she shows him a horse which she has provided for him, and tells him to mount it and escape. Sancho refuses, and asks her to unveil herself. She does so, and attempts to shake his resolution, which is however only the more confirmed when he sees who his liberator is. Sancho returns to the prison and Estrella to her house. The play ends with the scenes given.]

Present: A Servant, *the* King; *afterwards the* Alcaldes

SERVANT — My lord,
The two Alcaldes on your Highness wait.
King — Bid them with their wands of office enter.
[*Exit Servant.*

King — The promise that to Sancho Ortiz I gave,
If in my power it lie will I fulfill;
But of my part in this most cruel deed
Repented truly, letting no hint escape.

Enter the two Alcaldes

Don Pedro— Great King, the crime being fully proved,
The law demands the sentence.
King— Pronounce it.
Only, being fathers of the country,
I charge you see to it that it be just.
And clemency than justice is ofttimes
More wise. Sancho Ortiz is of Seville
A magistrate, if he who at his sword
Met death a magistrate of Seville was.
Mercy the one demands, if the other justice.
Farfan— Alcaldes are we of Seville, my lord;
In us you have reposed your confidence,
In us your honor have reposed. These wands
Do represent your Highness; and if false
In aught they prove to their most sacred trust,
They do yourself offend. Straight they do look
To heaven, whence they derive their powers;
But bending to the corrupt desires of men
They turn from their high source away.
King— Thus they should bend, but only thus;—nor would I
That, in the sentence, law shall serve the ends
Of justice.
Don Pedro— My lord, your Highness is for us
Justice and law; and on your judgments hang
Our welfare. Bid him live and he shall live;
For from the King's decree is no appeal.
Kings are by God appointed; God from the brow
Of Saul the sovereign crown doth take, to place it
On that of lowly David.
King— Go; find what the sentence is,
What the defense, and let Ortiz be led
Forth to the punishment the law ordains.
[*Exit Farfan.*
Don Pedro de Guzman, a word with you
Apart.
Don Pedro— What are your Highness's commands?
King— The death of Sancho, friend Don Pedro,
Will not restore the man he killed to life;
And thus, 'twere my desire, a punishment
Less harsh imposing, that to Gibraltar
Or to Granada we should banish him,
Where in my service fighting he may find
A voluntary death. What say you?
Don Pedro— This:
That I am called Don Pedro de Guzman,

And hold myself, my liege, at your command.
My life, my fortune, and my sword are yours.
King — A close embrace, Don Pedro de Guzman.
Nor less from your true heart did I expect.
Go now, and God be with you; send me hither
Presently Farfan de Ribera. [*Aside.*] Thus
Flattery doth level mountains. [*Exit Don Pedro.*

Enter Farfan

Farfan — My lord,
Your orders I await.
King — It troubled me,
Farfan de Ribera, that Sancho Ortiz
Should die; but milder counsels now prevail,—
That death be changed to banishment, which is
Indeed a death prolonged, a living death.
Your voice alone is wanting to confirm
The sentence.
Farfan — Command Farfan de Ribera,
My lord, something of weightier import;
Nor doubt but that my loyalty no doubt
Shall hold from serving you in all things.
King — So
Do you prove yourself Ribera, adorned
With all the virtues of an earlier day,
Your constant, true companions. Go, and God
Be with you. [*Exit Farfan.*
The business was well managed.
Sancho Ortiz from death escapes: my pledge
Is thus redeemed; and none doth aught suspect.
As general of some frontier shall he go;
With which at once I banish and reward him.

Enter Alcaldes

Don Pedro — The sentence now, great King, is signed
And only waits your Highness's approval.
King — Doubtless the sentence such as I desired
That it should be, such noble lords have made it.
Farfan — 'Tis such as doth our loyalty approve.
King [*reads*] —
«We do decree, and so pronounce the sentence,
That Sancho Ortiz be in the public square
Beheaded.» — Is this the sentence, caitiffs,
That you have signed! Thus, caitiffs, to your King
Your pledge you keep. God's death!

Farfan— The pledge he gives
The least of us is ready, as you have proof,
My lord, descended from the judgment seat,
With his life to redeem; but seated there,
No human power, nor earth and heaven combined,
Can make him from the right one jot to swerve
In word or deed.
Don Pedro— As vassals our obedience
You command: as judges your authority
Extends not over us; to conscience only
Our fealty, as such, being due. In this
Its rights the council of Seville will know
How to maintain.
King— 'Tis well. Enough. You all
Do shame me.

Enter Don Arias, Estrella

Don Arias— Estrella is here.
King— What course
To take, Don Arias? What counselest thou,
In this so great perplexity?

Enter the Warden *with* Don Sancho

Warden— My lord,
Sancho Ortiz here waits your pleasure.
Don Sancho— Great King,
Wherefore with death dost thou not end my woes?
Wherefore, the rigor of the law applying,
My cruel sufferings dost thou not end?
Busto Tabera at my hand met death:
Let death be my award; let him who slays
Be slain. Show mercy, meting justice.
King— Stay:
What warrant hadst thou for Tabera's death?
Don Sancho—
A paper.
King— Signed by whom?
Don Sancho— That would the paper
Most clearly tell, did it speak; but papers torn
Confusèd accents utter. All I know
Is, that I slew the man I held most dear,
For that I so had pledged my word. But here
Estrella at thy feet the sentence waits
To death that dooms me,—vengeance all too slight.

King — Estrella, with a noble of my house,
A gallant youth, and in Castile a prince
And powerful lord, we have betrothèd you;
And in return the favor of Sancho's pardon
We ask, which 'tis not just that you deny.
Estrella — If that I am betrothed, my sovereign liege,
Let Sancho Ortiz go free; nor execute
My vengeance.
Don Sancho — Thy pardon thou dost grant me, then,
For that his Highness has betrothed thee?
Estrella — Yes:
Therefore it is I pardon thee.
Don Sancho — And thus
Thou art avenged for my offense?
Estrella — And satisfied.
Don Sancho —
I accept my life, that so thy hopes attain
Fulfillment; although to die were sweeter.
King — You are free.
Farfan — This to Seville is an offense,
My lord. Sancho Ortiz must die.
King [*to Don Arias*] — What now
To do? These people humiliate me,
And put me to confusion.
Don Arias — Speak.
King — Seville,
I to the law will answer for Tabera's death,
For I did cause it; I did command the deed.
To exonerate Sancho this suffices.
Don Sancho —
For this exoneration only did
My honor wait. The King commanded me
To kill him. So barbarous a deed I'd not
Committed, had he not commanded it.
King — He speaks the truth.
Farfan — Seville is satisfied.
For since thou didst command the deed,
Doubtless he gave thee cause.
King — Amazed the Sevillian
Nobleness of soul I contemplate.
Don Sancho — I
To fulfill the sentence of my banishment,
When thou another promise dost fulfill
Thou gavest me, will depart.
King — I will fulfill it.

Don Sancho —
The boon I asked, that thou for bride shouldst give me
The maid that I should name.
King — The boon is granted.
Don Sancho —
The hand of Doña Estrella then I claim;
And here a suppliant at her feet I crave
Pardon for my offense.
Estrella — Sancho Ortiz,
I am another's now.
Don Sancho — Another's!
Estrella — Yes.
Don Sancho —
Then is the sentence of my death pronounced!
King — Estrella, I have given my royal word,
And should fulfill it. What answerest thou?
Estrella — That as thou willest so be it. I am his.
Don Sancho —
And I am hers.
King — What wants there further, then?
Don Sancho —
Accord.
Estrella — And this there could not be between us,
Living together.
Don Sancho — 'Tis true; and therefore
I do absolve thee from thy promise.
Estrella — So
From thine I do absolve thee. The slayer
To see forever of my brother, in bed,
At board, must needs afflict me.
Sancho — And me, to be forever with the sister
Of him I slew unjustly, holding him dear
As my own soul.
Estrella — So then we are free?
Don Sancho — Yes.
Estrella — Then fare thee well.
Don Sancho — Farewell.
King — Stay.
Estrella — My lord, the man
Who slew my brother, though I do adore him,
Can never be my husband. [*Exit.*
Don Sancho — Nor I, my lord,
Because I adore her, do count it just
Her husband that I should be. [*Exit.*

Translation of Mary J. Serrano.

GIOVANNI VERGA

(1840–)

BY NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

ONE of the chief representatives of so-called «realistic» fiction in Italy is Giovanni Verga, who was born in Catania, Sicily, in 1840. His youth was spent in Florence and Milan; and after living a number of years in his native district, he returned to Milan, where he still resides. He has himself acknowledged that his best inspiration has come from the places which he knew as a boy. He has painted the Sicilian peasant with a master hand. The keen jealousy that leads too frequently to the sudden flash of the stiletto; the grinding poverty which is in such contrast to the beauty of the Sicilian landscape; the squalid sordidness that looks with greater sorrow on the death of an ass than the death of wife or child; the pathetic history of the girl who must go to her shame because life offers no aid to the virtuous poor; the father deprived of his son who must serve his time in the army,—all these motives are used by Verga with consummate power. He understands the force of contrast. He has a rapier wit; the laugh, sardonic too often, follows on the heels of pathos. But it is pathos that is most frequently brought into play,—pathos and the tragic. Few of his stories are not tragic. There is no glamour of triumphant virtue. The drama always ends with death and defeat.

The best known of Verga's works is the 'Cavalleria Rusticana,' which by reason of Mascagni's genius has become familiar to opera-goers all over the world. The story is short; there are no words wasted: for a moment the sky is bright, then the swift tropic storm comes; one blinding flash, and all the ruin is accomplished. Verga's flights are generally short. His longest story—'The Malavoglias'—is in reality a welding into one of a number of short stories. But throughout there is the same minute study of the reality,—the hard, gloomy life of the peasant. Verga, in the introduction or proem to one of his Sicilian tales, gives his notion of what fiction should be:—

«The simple truth of human life,» he says, «will always make us thoughtful; will always have the effectiveness of reality, of genuine tears, of the fevers and sensations that have afflicted the flesh. The mysterious processes whereby conflicting passions mingle, develop, and mature, will long constitute the chief fascination in the study of that psychological phenomenon called the plot of a story, and which modern analysis tries to follow with scientific care through the hidden paths of often contradictory complications. . . . We replace the artistic method, to which we owe so many glorious masterpieces, by a different method, more painstaking and more recondite: we willingly sacrifice the effect of the catastrophe, of the psychological result, as it was seen through an almost divine intuition by the great artists of the past; and we employ instead a logical development, inexorably necessary, less unexpected, less dramatic, but not less fateful. We are more modest, if not more humble; but the conquests that we make with our psychological verities will be none the less useful to the art of the future. . . . I have a firm belief that the triumph of the Novel, the completest and most human of all the works of art, will increase until the affinity and cohesion of all its parts will be so perfect that the process of its creation will remain a mystery like the development of human passions themselves. I have a firm belief that the harmony of its forms will be so absolute, the sincerity of its reality so evident, its method and justification so deeply rooted, that the artist's hand will remain absolutely invisible.

«Then the romance will seem to portray a real event; and the work of art will apparently have come about by itself, spontaneously springing into birth, and maturing like a natural fact, without any point of contact with its author. It will not have preserved in its living form any stamp of the mind in which it originated, any shade of the eye that beheld it, any trace of the lips that murmured the first words of it as the creative fiat: it will exist by its own reason, by the mere fact that it is as it should be and must be, palpitating with life, and yet as immutable as a bronze statue, the author of which has had the divine courage to eclipse himself, and disappear in his immortal work.»

Verga's earlier stories show decidedly the influence of the French school of fiction. His society novels are conventional and rather vapid, with little native power manifested. Such stories as ‘Helen's Husband,’ or ‘Eros,’ or ‘Royal Tiger,’ are no more valuable than the average run of French novels. Some of them are over-sentimental, as for instance the ‘Storia di una Capinera.’ But his Sicilian stories have an entirely different character. They smack of real life, and take hold of the imagination. The little story here presented as a specimen of Verga's realism may perhaps be regarded as morbid; but at the same time it fulfills to the letter the programme laid down in his literary creed quoted above. The story-teller has completely effaced himself. You forget that you are reading fiction: it seems like a transcript from life. Its dramatic power is none the less because it is so repressed. Much is left to the imagination; but the effect of the passions here contrasted — love and jealousy — is clearly seen by the desolation that follows, all the more pathetic because of the relationships of the three protagonists.

N. H. Dole

HOME TRAGEDY

Casa Orlandi was all at sixes and sevens. The young Countess Bice was in a slow decline. Some attributed the disease to constitutional feebleness; others to some deep-seated disorder.

In the large bedroom where the lights were turned low, although all that part of the town was illuminated as if for a festival, the mother, pale as a sheet, was sitting beside the sick-bed waiting for the doctor to come. She held in her feverish hand her daughter's thin and glowing hand, and was talking to her in that caressing accent and with that put-on smile wherewith we try to reply to the anxious and scrutinizing look of those who are seriously ill. Melancholy conversations were these, which under a pretended calmness concealed the dread of a fatal disease which was hereditary in the family, and had threatened the countess herself after Bice was born; which brought back the recollection of the hours of anxiety and worry attendant on the infancy of the delicate little girl, and the worry caused by the cruel presentiments which had almost choked down the woman's natural mother-love, and palliated the husband's first steps astray—that husband who had died young of a wasting illness, during which he had suffered for years confined to his easy-chair.

Later, another passion had caused the widow to bloom out in fresh youth. She had faded somewhat prematurely, what with the cares of the feeble infant, and of that husband who was the embodiment of a living death: it was a deep and secret affection, a cause of uneasiness and jealousy, mingling itself with all her mundane joys and apparently thriving upon them, and refining them, rendering them more subtile, more intense, like a delicate delight perfuming everything—a festa, a society woman's triumph.

Then suddenly this other threatening cloud had arisen—her daughter's illness darkening the bright skies of her happiness, and seeming to spread over the heavy curtains of the sick girl's bed, and to stretch out until it met with those former dark days;—her husband's long death struggle; the grave and anxious face of the very same physician who had been in charge of the other case; the tick-tock of the same clock which had marked the hours of death, and now filled the whole chamber, the whole house, with a gloomy presentiment. The words of the mother and of the daughter, though they tried to seem calm and gay, died away like a sigh in the shadow of the infinite vault.

Suddenly the electric bell echoed through a long suite of brilliant but deserted rooms.

A silent servant walking on his tiptoes preceded the doctor, who was an old family friend, and seemed to be the only calm person, while all the rest were full of anxiety. The countess stood up, unable to hide her nervous agitation.

« Good evening I'm a little late to-day. I am just finishing my round of calls. And how is the young lady? »

He had taken his seat by the bedside. Then when he had asked to have the shade removed from the lamp, he began his examination of the invalid, holding between his white, fat fingers the girl's colorless, delicate wrist, and asking her the usual questions.

The countess replied with a slight tremor of anxiety in her voice; Bice with monosyllables in a feeble tone, keeping her bright restless eyes fixed on the doctor.

In the reception-room was heard the subdued sound of the bell several times repeated, announcing other visitors; and the chambermaid entered like a shadow to whisper into the countess's ear the names of the intimate friends who had come to inquire after the young countess.

Suddenly the doctor raised his head: —

« Who is it that just entered the drawing-room? » he asked with a certain vivacity.

« Marquis Danei, » replied the countess.

« The usual medicine for to-night, » continued the doctor, as if he had forgotten what he had asked. « We must take notice at what hour the fever begins. Otherwise there is nothing new. We must give time for the cure. »

But he did not take his fingers off the girl's wrist, and he fixed a scrutinizing look on her. She had closed her eyes. The mother waited anxiously. For a moment her daughter's brilliant eyes looked into hers, and then a sudden flush of color glowed in Bice's face.

« For heaven's sake, doctor, for heaven's sake! » exclaimed the countess in a supplicating voice, as she accompanied the doctor into the drawing-room, paying no attention to the friends and relatives who were waiting there chattering in low voices, « how do you think my daughter is this evening? Tell me the truth. »

« Nothing new,» he replied; « the usual touch of fever, the usual nervous disturbance.»

But as soon as they had reached a small room on one side, he planted himself directly in front of the countess, and said brusquely:—

« Your daughter is in love with this Signor Danei.»

The countess uttered not a word in reply. Only she grew horribly pale, and instinctively put her hand to her heart.

« I have been suspecting it for some time,» continued the doctor, with a sort of harsh outspokenness. « Now I am sure of it. It makes a complication in her illness which on account of the patient's extreme sensitiveness at this moment might become serious. We must think it over.»

« He! »

That was the first word that escaped from the countess's lips. It seemed to be spoken outside of her.

« Yes: her pulse told me so. Has she never shown any sign of it? Have you never suspected anything of the sort?»

« Never! Bice is so timid — so — »

« Does the Marquis Danei come to the house often?»

The poor woman, under the keen penetrating eyes of this man who seemed to have assumed the importance of a judge, stammered, « Y-yes.»

« We doctors sometimes have the cure of souls,» added the doctor with a smile. « Perhaps it was a fortunate thing that he came while I was here.»

« But all hope is not lost, is it, doctor?—for the love of God! »

« No. It depends on circumstances. Good evening.»

The countess remained a moment in that same room, which was almost dark, wiping with her handkerchief the cold perspiration that stood out on her temples. Then she went back through the drawing-room swiftly, greeting her friends with a nod, and scarcely looking at Danei, who was in a corner among the intimates.

« Bice! My daughter! The doctor thinks you are better to-day: did you know it?»

« Yes, mama! » replied the girl gently, with that heart-chilling indifference characteristic of those who are very ill.

« Some of our friends are here; they came on your account. Would you like to see any of them?»

« Who are here? »

« Well, a number of them: your aunt Augusta, Signor Danei. Shall they come in for a little moment? »

Bice closed her eyes as if she were tired out, and she was so pale that in the semi-darkness a faint tint of pink could be seen mounting to her cheek.

« No, mama, I do not wish to see any one. »

Through her closed eyelids, delicate as rose-leaves, she felt her mother's keen and sorrowful eyes fixed upon her. Suddenly she opened them, and flung her slender trembling arms around her neck with an inexpressible mingling of confusion, tenderness, and vexation. Mother and daughter held each other long in a close embrace, without saying a word, weeping tears which they would have been glad to hide. . . .

The relatives and friends who were anxiously waiting to hear about the invalid had the usual report from the countess, who stood right in the middle of the drawing-room, unable to repress an inward tension that now and again cut her breath short. When they had all taken their departure, she and Danei remained face to face. Many times during Bice's illness they had been left alone together for a little time, as they were now, in the window recess, exchanging a few words of comfort and hope, or absorbed in a silence that blended their thoughts and minds in the same painful preoccupation; sad and precious moments, in which she gained the courage and the power to re-enter into the close and lugubrious atmosphere of the sick-room with a smile of encouragement.

She stood some time without opening her mouth, her hand pressed to her forehead. She had such an expression of sadness in her whole appearance that Danei did not know what to say. At last he took her hand. She withdrew it. « Listen, Roberto. I have something to tell you, something on which my daughter's life depends. »

He waited, grave, a little anxious.

« Bice loves you. »

Danei looked confounded, gazing at the countess, who had hidden her face in her hands and was sobbing.

« She? It is impossible! Just consider! »

« No. The idea was suggested by the doctor, and now I am sure of it. She is dying of love for you. »

« I swear to you, I swear to you that— »

"I know it; I believe you; I have no need of seeking the reason why my daughter loves you, Roberto," exclaimed the mother, sadly. And she sank down on the sofa. Roberto was also agitated. He tried to take her hand again. She gently withheld it.

"Anna!"

"No, no!" she replied resolutely. And the silent tears seemed to furrow her delicate cheeks, as if years — years of grief and punishment — had been suddenly thrust into her thoughtless life.

The silence seemed insurmountable. At last Roberto murmured, "What do you wish me to do? Tell me."

She looked at him with unspeakable anguish and perplexity, and stammered, "I don't know — I don't know. Let me go back to her. Leave me alone!" . . .

When the countess returned to the sick-room, her daughter's eyes in the shadow of the curtain were fixed on her with such a singularly ardent flame that her mother's blood seemed frozen as she stood on the threshold.

"Mama!" cried Bice, "who is in there now?"

"No one, dear."

"Ah! stay with me, then. Don't leave me."

And the girl grasped her hands, trembling.

"Poor little girl! Poor dear! You will soon be well. Don't you know the doctor said so?"

"Yes, mama."

"And — and — you shall be happy."

The daughter still looked at her mother in the same way.

"Yes, mama."

Then she closed her eyes, which seemed black in their sunken sockets. A death-like silence followed. The mother gazed at that pale and impenetrable face before her with keen eyes, flushing and then turning pale.

Suddenly a deep pallor came over her face, and she cried in an altered voice, "Bice!"

Her breast heaved spasmodically as if something were struggling with death within. Then she leaned over her daughter, placing her feverish cheek upon the other cheek so thin and pale, and whispered in her daughter's ear almost so low as to be unintelligible, "Do you hear, Bice? You love him?"

Bice suddenly opened her eyes wide; her face was all aflame. And with those wide-open and almost frightened eyes, fascinated by her mother's tearful face, she stammered with an indescribable accent of bitterness, and as it were of reproach, "O mama!"

Then the hapless woman, feeling that accent and that exclamation penetrate to the very depths of her heart, had the courage to add, "Danei has asked for your hand."

"O mama! O mama!" said the girl, again and again, with the same beseeching and agonized tone, wrapping the sheet around her with a sense of shame. "Mamma mia!"

The countess, who seemed as if she were on the verge of fainting, stammered, "But if you do not love him — if you do not love him — say so — tell me — "

The girl listened, palpitating, anxious, moving her lips without uttering a word, with her eyes wide open, and seeming too large for her wasted face, gazing into her mother's eyes. Suddenly as her mother bent over her, she threw her arms around her neck, trembling all over, pressing her with all the power of her slender arms, with an effusion that told the whole story.

The mother, in an impulse of despairing love, sobbed, "You shall get well, you shall get well."

And she also trembled convulsively. . . .

The next day the countess was waiting for Danei in her boudoir, sitting near the grate and stretching toward the fire her hands that were so white that they seemed bloodless, and with her eyes fixed on the flames. What thoughts, what visions, what recollections, were passing before those eyes! The first time that she had felt disturbed at the sight of Roberto — the silence that had unexpectedly come upon them — the first words of love that he had whispered in her ear as he bent his head and lowered his voice — the delicious quickening of the pulse that sent the color to her cheeks and neck as she saw him waiting in the vestibule of the Apollo to see her pass, handsome, elegant, in her white satin mantellina. Then afterwards, the long rose-colored day-dreams in that very spot, the palpitating intense joys, the feverish expectation, during those hours when Bice was taking her music-lesson or drawing.

Now at the sound of the bell she arose with a nervous tremor; and immediately by an effort of the will she sat down again with her hands crossed on her lap.

The marquis stood hesitatingly on the threshold. She stretched out her burning hand, but avoided looking at him. As soon as Danei, not knowing what to think, inquired for Bice, the countess replied after a brief silence, « Her life is in your hands.»

« For the love of God, Anna — you are mistaken! Bice is mistaken! It cannot be! It cannot be! »

The countess shook her head sadly: « No, I am not mistaken! She has confessed to me. The doctor says that her recovery depends — on that! »

« On what? »

Her only reply was to look into his eyes with her eyes glowing with fever. Then, under the influence of that look, his first word, impetuous, almost brusque, was, « Oh! — No! »

She clasped her hands.

« No, Anna! Just consider. It cannot be. You are mistaken,» said the marquis again in violent agitation.

Tears choked her voice. Then she stretched out her hands toward Roberto without saying a word, as in those happy days no more. Only her face, with its expression of anguish and of agonizing entreaty, had entirely changed in twenty-four hours. Roberto bent his head down to hers.

Both of them were upright and loyal souls, in the worldly sense of the word, so far as it means being sincere in every act. Since Fate had seen fit to humble these proud and worthy heads, they were for the first time required to face a result that abruptly upset all their logic and showed its falsity. The countess's revelation had overwhelmed Danei with a sort of stupor. At this moment, as he thought the matter over, he was terrified; and in that contest of loves and duties, under the reserve imposed upon both of them by their relationships which rendered it more difficult, he found himself at a complete loss. He spoke of themselves, of the past, of the future so full of peril; he tried to hit upon phrases and words that should smooth the way for his arguments, lest by their harshness they should offend or wound a single one of those sentiments so delicate and complicated.

« But just imagine, Anna! Such a marriage is out of the question! »

She knew not what to say. She merely murmured, « My daughter! my daughter! »

"Well! Do you wish me to go away? do you wish me to leave you forever? You know what a sacrifice I should make! Well, do you wish it?"

"If you did, she would die."

Roberto hesitated before bringing forth his last resource. Then lowering his voice he said, "Well, then — then nothing remains but to confess everything."

The mother grew rigid with a nervous spasm; her fingers clutched the arms of the easy-chair; and she replied in a muffled voice, bending her head, "She knows it — she suspects!"

"And in spite of it?" asked Danei after a brief silence.

"It would kill her. I made her believe that she was mistaken."

"And she believed you?"

"Oh!" exclaimed the countess with a sad smile, "love is credulous. She believed me!"

"And you?" he demanded, with a quiver which he could not control betraying itself in his voice.

"I have already sacrified everything for my daughter." Then she extended her hand and added, "Do you perceive how calm I am?"

"Are you certain that you will always be as calm?"

She replied, "I am." And he felt a chill at the roots of his hair, at the back of his head.

He arose staggering, and his head sank on his chest.

"Listen, Roberto. Now it is the mother who embraces you: Anna is dead! Think of my daughter; love her for me and for her own sake. She is pure and beautiful as an angel. Happiness will bring back all her bloom. You will love her as you have never loved before. Forget everything that has passed; be calm!"

Roberto grew pale as death, and answered never a word.

The engagement of the Contessina Bice was officially announced a few days after she was regarded as fairly convalescent.

Friends and relatives came to congratulate her on these two fortunate events. The Marquis Danei was a most suitable person; and if any one indiscreetly remarked on the disparity in age between them, or made any other disparaging remark, a chorus of ladies unanimously arose in scandalized protest against such criticisms.

The girl was really returning to health, and growing radiant with new life, sincerity, credulity, oblivion,—the frank egoism of happiness, which found an answering chord in the heart of the mother, who found sufficient strength even to smile upon them. The doctor rubbed his hands, grumbling, "I deserve no thanks. I do like Pilate. This blessed time of youth laughs at science. Now here is my prescription: the spring at San Remo or at Naples; the summer at Pegli or Leghorn; a trip to Rome for the carnival—and a handsome little son to complete the cure."

When Bice wanted to take her mother along with her, the countess replied, "No. The doctor and I have nothing whatever to do with your journey. All my desire is that you may be happy."

And she smiled on the newly engaged pair with her rather pathetic smile. The daughter from time to time flashed a keen look, as it were involuntarily, first at her mother and then at her lover. When she heard her mother say these words, she, without knowing why, threw her arms tightly round her and hid her face in her bosom.

The countess had said that this should be her last festival; and at the wedding ceremony, when the rooms were brilliant with lights and crowded with friends and relatives, her pale delicate cheeks really reminded them of the days when they used to come and inquire for Bice. Roberto, when he kissed the countess's hand, could not hide a certain anxiety. Afterwards, when the last guest had departed, and the only carriage left was the marquis's little coupé at the entrance, and the hack had taken their luggage to the station, and Bice had gone to change her gown,—the countess and Roberto were left alone for a moment.

"Make her happy!" she said.

Danei was nervous: he kept fingering the button on his overcoat and taking off his gloves. He made no remark.

Mother and daughter held each other in a long and tender embrace. At last the countess almost brusquely pushed her daughter away, saying, "It's late. You will lose your train. Go, go!"

The Countess Orlandi had coughed a little that winter, and had occasionally called in the doctor; who, with the desire not to frighten her, scolded her for being in the habit of spending the morning in church, "to save her soul at the expense of her body," he would say. The worthy man pretended to make light of the matter, so as to encourage her, but in reality he was anxious; thus each of them almost deceived the other with a feigned gayety, though they both felt that the trouble was serious.

Bice wrote that she was well, that she was having a delightful time, that she was so happy; and later she hinted vaguely at a coming event which would hasten their return before the end of the year.

The countess telegraphed her to do nothing, but to await the event where they were, protesting that she feared the journey might be deleterious for her daughter. Later she said she would come and join her. But she did not start, inventing a thousand excuses, putting off from day to day the journey as if she dreaded it. Telegram followed telegram. At last Roberto had a dispatch:

« Shall arrive to-night. »

The first person whom Anna saw on the platform of the station when she arrived was Roberto, who was waiting for her. She pressed her muff spasmodically to her heart, as if she found it hard to breathe. The marquis kissed her gloved hand and gave her his arm while she whispered, « Bice — how is she? »

« Bice is well, » he replied,— « as well as could be expected. She will be so glad to see you. »

It seemed as if he were trying to choose the right words. He kept his eyes turned to the door, impatient to be at home. They passed swiftly by rows of brightly lighted houses and shops. Then they went into darkness as they crossed a square. Both instinctively kept at a distance and were silent.

Bice came hurrying forward to meet her mother, and threw herself on her neck with a storm of kisses and disconnected words. She was nervous, and Roberto gave her his arm to help her up-stairs. The countess followed, being herself weary, and loaded down under her heavy fur cloak.

When they met in the parlor by daylight, she was struck by Bice's appearance: by her loose dressing-sack, by her blue-veined hands, resting on the arms of the easy-chair into which she had sunk down as if exhausted, but radiant with serene happiness. Roberto bent down to whisper something in her ear. Without being aware of it, they kept going aside gladly, to indulge in little private conferences near the fireplace, the flames of which cast a roseate aureole around them; in their self-absorption far from the world, far from every one, forgetful of everything else.

After the first excitement of that evening, the countess seemed calmer. When she and Roberto chanced to be alone together, and he talked,—talked as if he were afraid of silence,—she listened with an abstracted smile, leaning back in her easy-chair near the fire, which lighted up her dark hair, and her fine profile, which in contrast with the light seemed like a cameo.

But a cloud seemed to hover between mother and daughter in the intimacy of the family: an annoying and insurmountable coolness which quenched all affectionate confidences; an embarrassment that rendered disquieting all Roberto's acts of politeness toward either of them, and sometimes even his presence with them — as if it were a shadow of the past, clouding the daughter's eyes, sending the color from the mother's cheeks, and even disturbing Roberto from time to time. A tinge of bitterness could be detected in the simplest words, in smiles which expected no return, in glances which passed from one to the other full of suspicion.

One evening when Bice had retired earlier than usual, and Roberto had remained in the parlor with the countess to keep her company, silence suddenly fell between them with a strange sense of impending evil. Anna was standing with bent head before the dying fire, shivering from time to time; and the lamp placed on the mantelpiece threw golden reflections on the masses of her hair, on the delicate nape of her neck, which seemed also to be lighted up with wandering flames. As Roberto stooped over to pick up the tongs, she gave a sudden start and bade him good-night, saying that she felt weary. The marquis accompanied her to the door: he also felt the impulse of a vague uneasiness. At that instant Bice appeared looking like a ghost, clad in a white dressing-sack. Mother and daughter looked at each other, and the former stood speechless, almost breathless. Roberto, the least embarrassed of the three, asked, « What is the matter, Bice? »

« Nothing. I couldn't go to sleep. What time is it? »

« It is not late. Your mother was just going to bed; she said she felt tired. »

«Ah!» replied Bice. «Ah!» That was all she said.

Anna, still trembling, murmured with a sad smile, « Yes, I am tired; at my age — my children!— »

«Ah!» said Bice again.

Then the mother, growing pale as death, as if choked by unspeakable anguish, added with the same melancholy smile, "Don't you believe me? Don't you believe, Bice?" And lifting her hair a little from her temples, she showed her that the locks underneath were all white.

"Oh, it is a long time—a long, long time!"

Bice, with an affectionate impulse, threw her arms around her neck, and hid her face without saying another word. And her mother's hands could feel how she was all trembling. Roberto, who felt as if he were on pins and needles, had turned to go out, seeing that his presence must be annoying under the circumstances. At that instant his eyes and Anna's met. He flushed, and for a moment there seemed to flash forth a recollection of the past.

The Countess Anna spent two weeks in her daughter's house, feeling all the time that she was an outsider, not only to Bice but also to Roberto. How changed they were! When he gave her his arm to go out to the dining-room—when Bice addressed her as "mama" without looking at her, and blushed when she spoke of her husband—

"Forget!—Be calm!" she had said to Roberto, and neither the one nor the other had forgotten at all.

She shut her eyes and shuddered at the thought. Sometimes, suddenly, she was overwhelmed by flashes of anger, of a strange unreasoning jealousy. He had robbed her of her daughter's heart! This man had taken everything from her!

One evening a great commotion was heard in the house. Carriages and servants were dispatched hastily in various directions. The physician and a woman came anxiously, and were instantly ushered into Bice's apartment. And not one came after *her;* her own daughter did not wish her to be present at this crisis of her life. No, no one of them had forgotten! When the man himself came to announce the birth of her granddaughter! when she saw him trembling and radiant—no, she had never seen him look that way before;—when she saw him by Bice's bedside, where the young mother lay pale as if she were dead, and his eyes filled with love for her alone, when his eyes looked only at her!—then she felt an implacable hatred toward this man, who caressed her daughter in her presence, and who even at that moment received Bice's answering smile.

When they gave her name to the little granddaughter, and she held the child in her arms at the baptismal service, she said with a smile, « Now I can die.»

Bice was slow in recovering her strength. Her delicate organism was still shaken. In the long days of convalescence, dark thoughts came to her mind,— moods of fierce and unreasonable irritation, of melancholy, as if she were neglected by every one. Then she would give her husband a strange look out of her clouded eyes and say, « Where have you been? Where are you going? Why do you leave me alone?»

Everything hurt her feelings: she even seemed to be jealous of the relics of beauty which her mother still possessed. And one day, trying to hide the eagerness which in spite of her gleamed in her eyes, she went so far as to ask her when she intended to go home.

The mother bent her head as if under the weight of an inevitable punishment.

But afterwards Bice became her natural self, and seemed to be asking forgiveness of them all by means of affectionate words and kisses. As soon as she was able to leave her bed, the countess set the day of her departure. When they bade each other farewell at the station, both mother and daughter were deeply affected: they kissed each other, and at the last moment, were as unable to say a word as if they never expected to meet again!

The countess reached home late at night, deeply depressed, benumbed with cold. The great deserted house was also cold, in spite of the great fire that had been lighted, in spite of the solitary lights in the melancholy rooms.

The Countess Anna's health rapidly failed. At first she attributed it to her weariness after the journey, the excitement, the severity of the season. For about three months she vibrated between her bed and her lounge, and the doctor came to see her every day.

« It is nothing,» she would say. « To-day I feel better. Tomorrow I shall get up.»

To her daughter she wrote regularly, but without referring to the seriousness of the disease that was killing her. Toward the beginning of the autumn she seemed to be really getting better; but all of a sudden she grew so much worse that her household felt obliged to telegraph to the marquis.

Roberto came the following day, greatly alarmed.

"Bice is not well," he said to the doctor who was awaiting him. "I am anxious about her too. She knows nothing about it. I was afraid that the news — the excitement — the journey — "

"You are right. The marchesa's health must be carefully watched. It is a disease that runs in the blood, surely. I myself should not have assumed such a responsibility; and if it had not been for the gravity of the case — "

"Is it very serious?" asked Roberto.

The doctor made a motion with his head.

The sick woman, as soon as her son-in-law's arrival was announced, became greatly agitated.

"And Bice?" she asked as soon as she saw him, "why did she not come?"

He hesitated, grew as pale as she was, and felt a cold perspiration at the roots of his hair.

"Have you been — did you tell her not to come?" she asked in a choked and broken voice.

He had never heard that voice nor seen those eyes before. A woman, leaning over the pillow, endeavored to calm the invalid. Finally she relapsed into silence, closing her eyes, and convulsively clasping her hands over her bosom.

Her last confession was made that evening. After she had partaken of the Communion she had her son-in-law called in again, and she pressed his hand as if to ask his pardon.

The vague odor of the incense still hovered in the room,— the odor of death,— now and again overcome by the sharper odor of ether, penetrating and choking. Livid shadows seemed to wander over the face of the dying countess.

"Tell her," murmured the poor woman, "tell my daughter — " She struggled with shortness of breath, which choked the words that she wanted to speak, and made her eyes roll as in delirium. Then she signified with a pitiful motion of her head that she could say no more.

From time to time it was necessary to lift from the pillows her poor wasted body, in the supreme anguish of the death-agony. But she signified that Roberto was not to touch her. Her hair, which was white as snow, was in disorder.

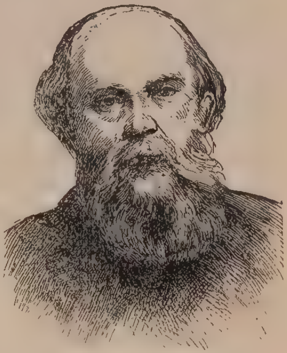
"No — no — " those were her last words, heard indistinctly murmured. She put up her hands to join together the night-robe, which had opened at the neck; and thus with her hands folded she passed away.

PAUL VERLAINE

(1844-1896)

BY VICTOR CHARBONNEL

Justice, for Paul Verlaine, came only with death. He was assuredly one of the greatest poets of France in the nineteenth century. But the strangeness of his life, and of some parts of his work, injured his glory. Severe critics treated him as «bohemian» and «decadent,» and believed they had thus fairly judged him. He was, according to his own expression, «a cursed poet.» Only now does time throw over the wrongs of the man and the errors of the writer the forgetfulness necessary to conceal what was not truly noble and glorious. And the name of Paul Verlaine has its place in the luminous train marked by the names of Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Alfred de Vigny, Théodore de Banville, and Leconte de Lisle, across the history of French letters.



Paul Verlaine

Paul Verlaine was born at Metz in 1844. His father was officer of a regiment of engineers in that city. When, in 1851, he retired from the army, he established himself in Paris. The future poet followed him there, and then pursued his classical studies. He scarcely distinguished himself except for an impatient eagerness to read all the poets both ancient and modern. As soon as he had left school, he yielded to his poetic instinct, abandoned the different employments to which they wished to attach him, and joined a group of young poets who had published their first verses with conspicuous success, and who were forming a kind of literary association called the «Parnasse.» It was to the Parnasse that in 1866 he carried his initial work, ‘Les Poèmes Saturniens.’ The book was distinguished for the gracious and harmonious freedom of rhythm, and for a charm of tender melancholy.

From that time the young author became the friend of the «Parnassians»: of Leconte de Lisle, of Sully-Prudhomme, of Léon Diers, of Catulle Mendès, and especially of François Coppée.

In 1867, the ‘Fêtes Galantes’ appeared. The novelty and the poetic daring of this work were warmly discussed. Then Verlaine went away from literary environments, and lived a life of mad debauchery. He returned to letters in 1870 with a volume entitled ‘La Bonne Chanson,’ in which are some of his best pieces.

Married to a young girl of sixteen, he made her very unhappy by the eccentricities of his character. Moreover, having allowed himself to be drawn into the revolutionary movement of the Commune of Paris in 1871, he was obliged to leave France and take refuge in London. This separation completed the disunion between the poet and his young wife. Henceforth it was impossible for them to establish a good understanding with each other. This domestic misfortune certainly seems to have been the primary cause of all the miseries and disorders of Verlaine's existence.

In his forlorn condition he bound himself in close friendship with a young poet, Arthur Rimbaud. As the two friends were traveling together in Belgium, Paul Verlaine, carried away by a sudden inexplicable fit of wrath, drew a revolver and shot his companion twice. The court of Brussels condemned him to two years' imprisonment.

It was then, from 1873 to 1875, that he wrote in the prison of Brussels ‘Romances Sans Paroles’; (Romances Without Words); and that in the prison of Mons, he pondered over the poems which were to compose his masterpiece, ‘Sagesse.’ This last book was not published, however, until 1881. Meantime Verlaine had exiled himself in England, not having dared to revisit his friends in France, and had earned his living as a teacher of French and of the classics. These years were, he says in the preface of ‘Sagesse’ (Wisdom), «six years of austerity, of meditation, of obscure labor.» Converted by the good counsels of the chaplain of the Mons prison, there was revived in his spirit the Christian sentiments of his childhood.

But, returned to Paris, he abandoned himself to debauchery again, and lived in the greatest distress. His friends gave him some assistance; and when he no longer had bread, or when disease succeeded long privations, he went to the hospital. For fifteen years he was the «poor Lélian.»

His work since ‘Sagesse’ (1881) is quite considerable, and very confused. There are in verse—‘Jadis et Naguère’ (Days Past and Gone: 1885), ‘Amour’ (Love: 1888), ‘Parallèlement’ (In Parallels: 1889), ‘Dédicaces’ (Dedications: 1890), ‘Bonheur’ (Happiness: 1891), ‘Choix de Poésies’ (Chosen Poems: 1891), ‘Chansons pour Elle’ (Songs for Her: 1891), ‘Liturgies Intimes’ (Personal Liturgies: 1892), ‘Elegies’ (1893), ‘Odes en Son Honneur’ Odes in Her Honor: 1893), ‘Dans les Limbes (In Limbo: 1894), ‘Epigrammes’ (1894), ‘Chair’ (Flesh: 1896); and in prose—‘Les Poètes Maudits’ (The Cursed Poets:

1884), ‘Memoires d'un Veuf’ (Memories of a Widower: 1892), ‘Mes Hôpitaux’ (My Hospitals: 1892), ‘Mes Prisons’ (1893), ‘Confessions’ (1895), ‘Quinze Jours en Hollande’ (A Fortnight in Holland: 1895), twenty-six biographies in ‘Les Hommes d'Aujourd'hui’ (The Men of To-day).

Paul Verlaine died the 8th of January, 1896. His end was without suffering. Death was gentler than life had been to him. All the poets, and the poets only, accompanied his coffin to the church and to the cemetery. He received no official honors. And the noble simplicity of this funeral was a touching spectacle, well befitting «poor Lélian.»

Before his tomb, the poet François Coppée thus began his address of farewell to the dead: «Let us bow over the bier of a child; let us respectfully salute the tomb of a true poet.» A child in his life, a true poet in his work: such indeed was Paul Verlaine. Like a child, he had a tender heart, a candid and changeable spirit, a weak and capricious character. According to chance, sometimes evil carried him away, and sometimes good. One might almost say that good and evil sprang up within him in a kind of dim half-consciousness, but that he did not do either good or evil. If he had a sinful life, it was a life without perversity. And his repentance, apparently childish, attained the grandeur of holy tears. He remained a child always; and a child whose natural goodness was better than its existence. Even by this he was the poet. Like all true poets, he spoke out the sincerity of his soul. His poetry is a cry of the soul. It is a song of faith, or a complaint; it is the free fancy of a being who is happy or who weeps. By a kind of art, involuntary, spontaneous, and yet refined and supremely delicate, he wrote exquisite little songs; and also the most serious, most Christian poems of this century.

Victor Charbonnel.

[The following poems by Paul Verlaine are reprinted by permission of Stone & Kimball, publishers.]

CLAIR DE LUNE

YOUR soul is as a moonlit landscape fair,
Peopled with maskers delicate and dim,
That play on lutes, and dance, and have an air
Of being sad in their fantastic trim.

The while they celebrate in minor strain
Triumphant love, effective enterprise,
They have an air of knowing all is vain,—
And through the quiet moonlight their songs rise,

The melancholy moonlight, sweet and lone,
That makes to dream the birds upon the tree,
And in their polished basins of white stone
The fountains tall to sob with ecstasy.

LE FAUNE

An ancient terra-cotta Faun,
A laughing note in 'mid the green,
Grins at us from the central lawn,
With secret and sarcastic mien.

It is that he foresees, perchance,
A bad end to the moments dear,
That with gay music and light dance
Have led us, pensive pilgrims, here.

MANDOLINE

The courtly serenaders,
The beauteous listeners,
Sit idling 'neath the branches;
A balmy zephyr stirs.

It's Tircis and Aminta,
Clitandre,— ever there!—
Damis, of melting sonnets
To many a frosty fair.

Their trailing flowery dresses,
Their fine beflowered coats,
Their elegance and lightness,
And shadows blue,— all floats

And mingles,— circling, wreathing,
In moonlight opaline,
While through the zephyr's harping
Tinkles the mandoline.

L'AMOUR PAR TERRE

The wind the other night blew down the Love
That in the dimmest corner of the park
So subtly used to smile, bending his arc,
And sight of whom did us so deeply move

One day! The other night's wind blew him down!
The marble dust whirls in the morning breeze.
Oh, sad to view, o'erblotted by the trees,
There on the base, the name of great renown!

Oh, sad to view the empty pedestal!
And melancholy fancies come and go
Across my dream, whereon a day of woe
Foreshadowed is — I know what will befall!

Oh, sad! — And you are saddened also, Sweet,
Are not you, by this scene? although your eye
Pursues the gold and purple butterfly
That flutters o'er the wreck strewn at our feet.

THE SPELL

Son joyeux, importun, d'un clavecin sonore.— Pétrus Borel.

The keyboard, over which two slim hands float,
Shines vaguely in the twilight pink and gray,
Whilst with a sound like wings, note after note
Takes flight to form a pensive little lay
That strays, discreet and charming, faint, remote,
About the room where perfumes of Her stray.

What is this sudden quiet cradling me
To that dim ditty's dreamy rise and fall?
What do you want with me, pale melody?
What is it that you want, ghost musical,
That fades toward the window waveringly,
A little open on the garden small?

FROM ‹BIRDS IN THE NIGHT›

SOME moments, I'm the tempest-driven bark
That runs dismasted mid the hissing spray,
And seeing not Our Lady through the dark,
Makes ready to be drowned, and kneels to pray.

Some moments, I'm the sinner at his end,
That knows his doom if he unshriven go,
And losing hope of any ghostly friend,
Sees hell already gape, and feels it glow.

Oh, but!—some moments, I've the spirit stout
Of early Christians in the lion's care,
That smile to Jesus witnessing, without
A nerve's revolt or turning of a hair!

GIVE ear unto the gentle lay
That's only sad that it may please;
It is discreet, and light it is:
A whiff of wind o'er buds in May.

The voice was known to you, (and dear?)
But it is muffled latterly
As is a widow,—still, as she
It doth its sorrow proudly bear,

And through the sweeping mourning-veil
That in the gusts of Autumn blows,
Unto the heart that wonders, shows
Truth like a star now flash, now fail.

It says—the voice you knew again!—
That kindness, goodness, is our life;
And that of envy, hatred, strife,
When death is come, shall naught remain.

It says how glorious to be
Like children, without more delay,
The tender gladness it doth say
Of peace not bought with victory.

Accept the voice,—ah, hear the whole
Of its persistent, artless strain:
Naught so can soothe a soul's own pain,
As making glad another soul!

It pines in bonds but for a day,—
The soul that without murmur bears.
How unperplexed, how free it fares!
Oh, listen to the gentle lay!

I've seen again the One child, verily;
I felt the last wound open in my breast,—
The last, whose perfect torture doth attest
That on some happy day I too shall die!

Good, icy arrow, piercing thoroughly!
Most timely came it from their dreams to wrest
The sluggish scruples laid too long to rest,—
And all my Christian blood hymned fervently.

I still hear, still I see! O worshiped rule
Of God! I know at last how comfortful
To hear and see! I see, I hear alway!

O innocence, O hope! Lowly and mild,
How I shall love you, sweet hands of my child,
Whose task shall be to close our eyes one day!

The sky-blue smiles above the roof
Its tenderest;
A green tree rears above the roof
Its waving crest.

The church-bell in the windless sky
Peaceably rings;
A skylark soaring in the sky
Endlessly sings.

My God, my God, all life is there,
Simple and sweet;
The soothing beehive murmur there
Comes from the street!

What have you done, O you that weep
In the glad sun,—
Say, with your youth, you man that weep,
What have you done?

APRÈS TROIS ANS

When I had pushed the narrow garden-door,
Once more I stood within the green retreat;
Softly the morning sunshine lighted it,
And every flower a humid spangle wore.

Nothing is changed. I see it all once more:
The vine-clad arbor with its rustic seat;
The water-jet still plashes silver sweet,
The ancient aspen rustles as of yore.

The roses throb as in a bygone day,
As they were wont; the tall proud lilies sway.
Each bird that lights and twitters is a friend.

I even found the Flora standing yet,
Whose plaster crumbles at the alley's end—
Slim, 'mid the foolish scent of mignonette.

MON RÊVE FAMILIER

Oft do I dream this strange and penetrating dream:
An unknown woman, whom I love, who loves me well,
Who does not every time quite change, nor yet quite dwell
The same,—and loves me well, and knows me as I am.

For she knows me! My heart, clear as a crystal beam
To her alone, ceases to be inscrutable
To her alone, and she alone knows to dispel
My grief, cooling my brow with her tears' gentle stream.

Is she of favor dark or fair?—I do not know.
Her name? All I remember is that it doth flow
Softly, as do the names of them we loved and lost.

Her eyes are like the statues',—mild, grave, and wide;
And for her voice she has as if it were the ghost
Of other voices,—well-loved voices that have died.

LE ROSSIGNOL

Like to a swarm of birds, with jarring cries
Descend on me my swarming memories;
Light 'mid the yellow leaves, that shake and sigh,
Of the bowed alder — that is even I! —
Brooding its shadow in the violet
Unprofitable river of Regret,
They settle screaming. Then the evil sound,
By the moist wind's impatient hushing drowned,
Dies by degrees, till nothing more is heard
Save the long singing of a single bird,
Save the clear voice — O singer, sweetly done! —
Warbling the praises of the Absent One.
And in the silence of a summer night
Sultry and splendid, by a late moon's light
That sad and sallow peers above the hill,
The humid hushing wind that ranges still
Rocks to a whispered sleep-song languidly
The bird lamenting and the shivering tree.

INSPIRATION

Ah, Inspiration, splendid, dominant,
Egeria with the lightsome eyes profound,
Sudden Erato, Genius quick to grant,
Old picture Angel of the gilt background!

Muse, — ay, whose voice is powerful indeed,
Since in the first-come brain it makes to grow
Thick as some dusty yellow roadside weed,
A gardenful of poems none did sow! —

Dove, Holy Ghost, Delirium, Sacred Fire,
Transporting Passion, — seasonable queen! —
Gabriel and lute, Latona's son and lyre, —
Ay, Inspiration, summoned at sixteen!

What we have need of, we, the poets true,
That not believe in gods, and yet revere,
That have no halo, hold no golden clue,
For whom no Beatrix leaves her radiant sphere, —

We that do chisel words like chalices,
And moving verses shape with unmoved mind,
Whom wandering in groups by evening seas,
In musical converse ye scarce shall find,—

What we need is, in midnight hours dim-lit,
Sleep daunted, knowledge earned,—more knowledge still!
Is Faust's brow, of the woodcuts, sternly knit,—
Is stubborn Perseverance, and is Will!

Is Will eternal, holy, absolute,
That grasps—as doth a noble bird of prey
The steaming flanks of the foredoomèd brute—
Its project, and with it—skyward, away!

What we need, we, is fixedness intense,
Unequaled effort, strife that shall not cease;
Is night, the bitter night of labor, whence
Arises, sun-like, slow, the Masterpiece!

Let our inspired hearts, by an eye-shot tined,
Sway with the birch-tree to all winds that blow,
Poor things! Art knows not the divided mind—
Speak—Milo's Venus, is she stone or no?

We therefore, carve we with the chisel thought
The pure block of the beautiful, and gain
From out the marble cold where it was not,
Some starry-chiton'd statue without stain,

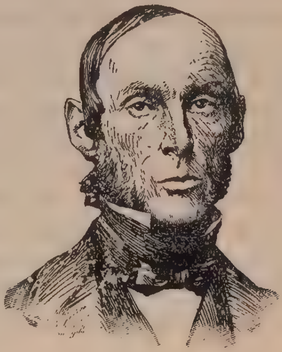
That one far day, posterity, new morn,
Enkindling with a golden-rosy flame
Our work, new Memnon, shall to ears unborn
Make quiver in the singing air our name!

The above translations are all by Gertrude Hall.

JONES VERY

(1803–1880)

If a parallel were sought from nature in describing a poet like Jones Very, the hermit-thrush might well be named. His life had the seclusion of that withdrawn chanter in the woods, his song had the shy removed quality and the spiritual note of that most ethereal of bird-musicians. A New-Englander, a transcendentalist, naturally affiliating with men like Channing and Emerson, Very walked by the inner light, and obeyed the vision. His unworldliness had in it something almost uncanny. He made a unique impression upon observant souls. «American soil,» says James Freeman Clarke, «has produced no other man like Jones Very.»



Jones Very

In the case of one with whom the life of the spirit is all-important, the outward events of his career seem of little moment: they were uneventful with Very. He was born August 28th, 1813, at Salem, Massachusetts; and his father was a sea-captain, at a time when men of that ancient profession were among the most respected citizens of the community, possessed of character and culture. He made several voyages with his father; attended school in Salem, and in New Orleans, Louisiana; and by teaching, saved money enough to go to Harvard, where he was graduated in 1836, remaining as a tutor of Greek for two years more. He then studied theology, and was licensed a Unitarian preacher of the Cambridge Association in 1843. But he never took a pastorate: he returned to his native town and led a retired life, contributing occasionally to the Salem Gazette, the Christian Register, and other papers representing his denomination. He read literature, ancient and modern; but his main interest was always in religious and ethical themes. When he felt a call to do so, he accepted an invitation to preach. If he deemed that God wished him to go to Boston for converse with Dr. Channing, thither he went. His smallest acts were in response to heavenly guidance.

In 1839 appeared the volume of Very's essays and poems. The former are scholarly and thoughtful; but the chief interest centres in the verse, posthumous editions of which were published in 1883 and 1886. In few books by an American poet has the note been more distinctive. Very's sonnets and lyrics are the musings of a mystic. The sonnets in particular express the history of the poet's religious nature. In the lyrics there is less subjectivity, more variety of form, and a wider range of theme; so that this portion of his work, as a whole, will have stronger attraction for the general reader. But in the irregular Shakespearean sonnet, with an extra syllable in the final line, Very has made his most intimate revelation of himself. He seems to have found this form peculiarly suited to the expression of his inmost ideals. Such verses — introspective, subtle, delicate, dealing with the loftiest aspirations of the human soul — cannot be expected to make a wide appeal. But they embody a remarkable poetic sentiment of the life of the spirit, and will always be precious to those for whom they were written. Lowell admired and loved Very's poetry; it has always found critical appreciation. Few poets had a deeper feeling for nature — nature as the garment of God — than this Salem recluse. He is at his happiest when breathing out his spiritual thought in descriptions which note affectionately, with a lover's constant eye, the grass, the tree, and the flower, and interpret the insect on the earth, and the clouds of the sky, as symbols of the One, maker of them all. When he died in his native town on May 8th, 1880, there were those who felt that one of the choicest of that noteworthy group of New England idealists had been removed.

[All the following poems are copyrighted, and they are republished here by permission of the family of Mr. Very.]

THE TREE

I LOVE thee when thy swelling buds appear,
And one by one their tender leaves unfold,
As if they knew that warmer suns were near,
Nor longer sought to hide from winter's cold;
And when with darker growth thy leaves are seen,
To veil from view the early robin's nest,
I love to lie beneath thy waving screen
With limbs by summer's heat and toil oppress;
And when the autumn winds have stript thee bare,
And round thee lies the smooth untrodden snow,
When naught is thine that made thee once so fair,
I love to watch thy shadowy form below,
And through thy leafless arms to look above
On stars that brighter beam when most we need their love.

DAY

DAY! I lament that none can hymn thy praise
In fitting strains, of all thy riches bless;
Though thousands sport them in thy golden rays,
Yet none like thee their Maker's name confess.
Great fellow of my being! woke with me,
Thou dost put on thy dazzling robes of light,
And onward from the East go forth to free
Thy children from the bondage of the night:
I hail thee, pilgrim! on thy lonely way,
Whose looks on all alike benignant shine;
A child of light, like thee, I cannot stay,
But on the world I bless must soon decline,—
New rising still, though setting to mankind,
And ever in the eternal West my dayspring find.

NIGHT

I THANK thee, Father, that the night is near
When I this conscious being may resign:
Whose only task thy words of love to hear,
And in thy acts to find each act of mine;
A task too great to give a child like me,—
The myriad-handed labors of the day
Too many for my closing eyes to see,
Thy words too frequent for my tongue to say:
Yet when thou see'st me burthened by thy love,
Each other gift more lovely then appears,
For dark-robed Night comes hovering from above,
And all thine other gifts to me endears;
And while within her darkened couch I sleep,
Thine eyes untired above will constant vigils keep.

THE DEAD

I SEE them: crowd on crowd they walk the earth,—
Dry leafless trees no autumn wind laid bare;
And in their nakedness find cause for mirth,
And all unclad would winter's rudeness dare:
No sap doth through their clattering branches flow,
Whence springing leaves and blossoms bright appear;

Their hearts the living God have ceased to know,
Who gives the springtime to th' expectant year;
They mimic life, as if from him to steal
His glow of health to paint the livid cheek;
They borrow words for thoughts they cannot feel,
That with a seeming heart their tongue may speak:
And in their show of life more dead they live
Than those that to the earth with many tears they give.

MAN IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

The flowers I pass have eyes that look at me,
The birds have ears that hear my spirit's voice,
And I am glad the leaping brook to see,
Because it does at my light step rejoice.
Come, brothers all, who tread the grassy hill,
Or wander thoughtless o'er the blooming fields,
Come, learn the sweet obedience of the will;
Then every sight and sound new pleasure yields.
Nature shall seem another house of thine,
When he who formed thee bids it live and play:
And in thy rambles e'en the creeping vine
Shall keep with thee a jocund holiday;
And every plant and bird and insect be
Thine own companions born for harmony.

THE GIANTS

The giants, they who walked the earth of old,
Are come again to scourge this feeble race:
And weapons long forgot in pride they hold,
To dash to earth your idols in disgrace;
Their armor proof shall be 'gainst sword or spear
Your strength now lifts to smite a feebler foe:
Your cries for help their ears can never hear,
Nor wounded can their eyes your sufferings know.
Arise! gird on the might that now you waste
On harlots and in feasting night and day:
Their comings-on shall be with eagles' haste,
As from the heights they dart upon their prey,
That all unknowing pass their eyries by,
With idle pace and earthward-turning eye.

THE HUMMING-BIRD

I CANNOT heal thy green-gold breast,
Where deep those cruel teeth have prest;
Nor bid thee raise thy ruffled crest,
And seek thy mate,
Who sits alone within thy nest,
Nor sees thy fate.

No more with him in summer hours
Thou'lt hum amid the leafy bowers,
Nor hover round the dewy flowers,
To feed thy young;
Nor seek, when evening darkly lowers,
Thy nest high hung.

No more thou'lt know a mother's care
Thy honeyed spoils at eve to share;
Nor teach thy tender brood to dare,
With upward spring,
Their path through fields of sunny air,
On new-fledged wing.

For thy return in vain shall wait
Thy tender young, thy fond, fond mate,
Till night's last stars beam forth full late
On their sad eyes:
Unknown, alas! thy cruel fate,
Unheard thy cries!

THE BUILDERS

THERE are who wish to build their houses strong,
Yet of the earth material they will take;
And hope the brick within the fire burnt long
A lasting home for them and theirs will make.

And one, who thought him wiser than the rest,
Of the rough granite hewed his dwelling proud;
And all who passed this eagle's lofty nest
Praised his secure retreat from tempest loud.

But one I knew who sought him out no wood,
No brick, no stone, though as the others born;

And those who passed where waiting still he stood,
Made light of him and laughed his hopes to scorn.

And time went by, and he was waiting still;
No house had he, and seemed to need one less:
He felt that waiting yet his Master's will
Was the best shelter in this wilderness.

And I beheld the rich man and the wise,
When lapsing years fell heavy on each shed,
As one by one they fled in lowly guise
To his poor hut for refuge and for bread.

THE WOOD-WAX

Laughing, midst its yellow blooms,
At the fire that it consumes,
Springs the wood-wax every year;
It has naught from man to fear.

From the turnpike's grassy side,
See it flourish far and wide,
On the steep and rocky hills:
Naught the wood-wax hurts or kills.

Glorious sight in summer-time
'Tis, to see it in its prime,
With its spikes of flowers untold,
Covering all the hills with gold!

Though a plant of stranger race,
It with us has found a place;
Vain the farmer's art or toil
That would drive it from the soil.

Vain in winter is the fire
Which he kindles in his ire;
Still it laughs, amidst its blooms,
At the flame that it consumes.

BEAUTY

I GAZED upon thy face,—and beating life
Once stilled its sleepless pulses in my breast,
And every thought whose being was a strife
Each in its silent chamber sank to rest.
I was not, save it were a thought of thee;
The world was but a spot where thou hadst trod;
From every star thy glance seemed fixed on me;
Almost I loved thee better than my God.
And still I gaze,—but 'tis a holier thought
Than that in which my spirit lived before.
Each star a purer ray of love has caught,
Earth wears a lovelier robe than then it wore;
And every lamp that burns around thy shrine
Is fed with fire whose fountain is divine.

THE PRAYER

WILT Thou not visit me?
The plant beside me feels thy gentle dew,
And every blade of grass I see
From thy deep earth its quickening moisture drew.

Wilt Thou not visit me?
Thy morning calls on me with cheering tone;
And every hill and tree
Lend but one voice,—the voice of Thee alone.

Come, for I need thy love
More than the flower the dew, or grass the rain;
Come, gently as thy holy dove;
And let me in thy sight rejoice to live again.

I will not hide from them
When thy storms come, though fierce may be their wrath,
But bow with leafy stem,
And strengthened follow on thy chosen path.

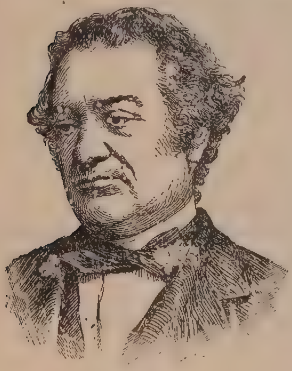
Yes, Thou wilt visit me:
Nor plant nor tree thine eye delights so well,
As, when from sin set free,
My spirit loves with thine in peace to dwell.

LOUIS VEUILLOT

(1813–1883)

BY FRÉDÉRIC LOLIÉE

Louis Veuillot, the celebrated Catholic journalist, was born at Boynes in the Department of Loiret, in 1813. He was a son of the people. The accident of his humble birth and popular education aided rather than hampered the free development of his innate literary talent. He entered upon journalism almost without preparation, still very uncertain of his own tendencies, and seeking a personal conviction while battling against others. His early début dates from 1831, when he was eighteen years old. In 1838 he went to Rome. A witness of the pomps of Holy Week in the metropolis of Catholicism, he was profoundly impressed by it. He was touched, he believed; and vowed to himself to have henceforth but one aim in life, that of unmasking and stigmatizing the enemies of religion. Soon after, he became editor-in-chief of L'Univers, the official sheet of «ultramontanism.» With inequalities of talent, sometimes doubtful taste, and excesses of language, inherent in his profession as a polemist as in his natural disposition, he possessed a vigorous, fruitful fancy, and originality of touch. Both friends and enemies were soon forced to recognize in Louis Veuillot an exceptional journalist, powerful in his treatment of important subjects, sparkling with wit and malice in articles written for special occasions.



Louis Veuillot

The whole life of the great polemist was one struggle in defense of religious interests, as he understood them; that is, in a way not always conformed to Christian charity, or even to the spirit of purely human justice. For thirty years, always armed, always ready to roll in the dust whoever tried to bar his way, he used Catholicism as a flag under the folds of which he led to combat not only the ardors of a sincere faith, but also his own passions, his personal enthusiasms, and his intellectual hatreds. (I say intellectual hatreds because he knew no others; and it is said, showed himself in his private relations the most conciliating of men.)

Virulent continuer of the ideas of his compatriot Joseph de Maistre, like him a fiery apostle of clerical immutability, less a philosopher than a soldier more directly concerned with the events of battle, he belonged primarily to the same authoritative school. He too wished to lead a fierce crusade against the modern spirit. Of the wrath and hatred roused by the publicist, nothing now remains but the remembrance of a skilled writer, who knew how to set an ineffaceable stamp upon the flying leaves of journalism. The power of renewing and varying was the gift *par excellence* of Louis Veuillot. He had those infinitely varied turns which continually stimulate and renew the attention. According to the subject undertaken, or the impression felt, he could combine in the most unexpected fashion, qualities apparently most irreconcilable: sensibility of heart and language rising to emotion and enthusiasm, with a biting criticism, a sharp satire, a pitilessly vigorous censure; the most beautiful impulses of faith and charity, the best-inspired Christian sentiment, with an irony full of bitterness; a light tone and a meditative spirit; a rare individuality of view and an imperturbable good sense; in fine, an exquisite delicacy of thought and speech with crudities of expression often very curious.

With the exception of two simple and charming novels, ‘Corbin d'Aubecourt’ and ‘L'Honnête Femme,’ a few stories or scattered impressions of pure art,—‘Çà et Là,’—and a volume of ‘Satires’ in verse, the twenty volumes of Louis Veuillot—‘Mélanges,’ ‘Les Libres Penseurs,’ ‘Les Odeurs de Paris,’ etc.—are collections of articles which have survived through the striking saliency of their style, the abundance of strong and unexpected images, and the number and variety of the portraits, for which he has been compared to La Bruyère. Properly speaking, he was not «a maker of books,» but the most original writer who has emerged from the ranks of the French press in the nineteenth century. That title is enough for his glory.

Frederic Loliée

A REMEMBRANCE

From ‘Çà et Là’

The Angelus was ringing. It rang softly, slowly, for a long time. We fell on our knees, praying silently. There was something broken and plaintive in the tone of the bell. I do not know why my heart was suddenly inclined to distrust life and happiness. A serene and profound silence veiled all the joy, all the splendor, of that beautiful day.

"No," I went on, continuing the thought of my prayer,—"no, the spirit is not deceived in the disquiet which human joy imparts to it! It justly fears to grow fond of these intoxications, and to fall asleep in them. It aspires higher. I dare not ask God for trials; nevertheless, his will be done. And if the sunbeam which now brightens my life must vanish, I consent."

"And I," she said in her turn, "thank God beforehand for the sorrows he will send me. As I receive the good things, so I protest I wish also to receive the evil things from him. I firmly believe that he will send them to me out of love. O Lord Jesus, who loved us unto death upon the cross, make us, through the blossoms and delights we now enjoy, to love the road to Calvary and the weight of the cross."

We pressed each other's hands .and were silent. I see the spot, I recall the words and their accent. Of that incident alone, of all those of the journey, I have forgotten nothing. The sun has vanished, the perfumes have fled, all the joyous sounds have fallen into eternal silence, and even the bell which accompanied our prayer will ring no more.

If I were to return to Chamonix, I should recognize only the spot by the way, and the tuft of grass on which she knelt; and I should go back only to see and kiss the spot. No, my God, my kind just master, I would not weep; or if I did, my tears would not accuse thee! I have always known thy mercy, and in thy punishments have always felt thy love.

All that thou gavest me for the time passed with the time. What matters it that the blossoms have perished, that the songs are stifled, that darkness has followed the sunshine? What thou gavest me for eternity I still possess, although I no longer see it. At thy bidding, death entered my home full of cradles. He took the young mother, he took my little children; and yet I denied death.

In the presence of death, thy Church, our immortal mother, lights torches symbolic of life, and with firm voice sings thy victory over death. Those who are no longer with me, O Lord, are with thee! I know that they live, I know that I shall live. They have gone from life, but not from my life. Can I think dead what is living in my heart?

But, O God! how can they support life,—all those one meets in the world who do not know thee, who run after joy and fear death? Some in mockery have asked me what is hell, and I have answered, "It is protracted life."

TIGRUCHE

From 'Les Odeurs de Paris'

I BLESS my lot: I have seen Tigruche!

There is a literary man in Paris who is the second correspondent of a foreign journal. Do not build an air-castle. This foreign journal is not English; it pays little, does little business. The first correspondent, charged with furnishing French news, which must eventually return to France, receives something from the State for divulging its secrets; he can, or at least he could, pay his rent. The second correspondent is only charged with overthrowing European kings and their ministers: that does not bring in much. Nevertheless he does not do it sparingly. But after all, his thunderbolts are not resounding, and the European kings and their ministers do not tremble at all. This second correspondent is named Péquet. It is Tigruche.

Péquet is the scourge of kings, Tigruche is the friend of artists.

Those who know Péquet do not know Tigruche; those who know Tigruche do not know Péquet. I have seen Péquet — as one may see him; I have seen Tigruche.

It was one night toward morning. My good fortune led me into a café on the boulevard where they were supping. I learned later that the artists of the neighboring theatres were accustomed to go there to regale upon a certain popular soup and certain ragoûts.

They entered in couples; and soon the café was full. Among this crowd some were noted, even famous. They talked noisily in a free language, coarse rather than original, startling rather than picturesque. Men and women were called "my old woman," "my little old woman," "my little olive-oil." It is current, and has endured a long time. They thee-and-thou'd each other. I listened without finding the scene as interesting as I should have expected.

I saw the prima donna of a little theatre come in. She was accompanied by her master of earlier in the evening, and her slave of a quarter of an hour. The master was not yet tired, the slave not yet emancipated. She had also her companion, who was very plump. She was a person of important duties, however: she was intrusted with showing out the poets who brought her mistress the conceptions of their genius. Twenty of them presented themselves every day. It was necessary to show them out politely, because some of them might slip into the little journals, and embarrass Madame. So she said; and her hat astonished me.

The star was immediately surrounded, and warmly felicitated upon her last creation, in which she sang "J'suis rincée," which will be the national song of the season. She received all this homage disdainfully, and said at last, "This bothers me. I wasn't made for stale jokes, and to amuse good-for-naughts. I have poetry in my heart."—I recalled Molière, so ambitious of playing tragedy, and who felt so severely the blows which his writings drew upon him. But the shiny hat of the lady companion stifled the spark of compassion which these words had inspired. If poetry were in your heart, old lady, your lady companion would have another hat!

I might note that the great artist ordered the popular soup and three poached eggs; but these details are in contemporary chronicles.

My interest was languishing, and I was thinking of withdrawing from the company of these stars, when a hurly-burly of a hundred cries, making noise enough, rose from all the tables:—"Tigruche! uche! uche! Here, Tigruche!—Aren't you shabby, Gruguche! Aren't you ugly!—You get crazier from hour to hour, my jewel!—And your King of Prussia, won't he part with an overcoat, then?—And your scum of Norway, isn't he coming?—You haven't thrashed your Bismarck enough, Tigruche: go at it again! uche! uche!"

Thus made his entry, Péquet, the Terror of Princes!

In truth, Péquet is not prepossessing in appearance. I have never seen a man who looks more like a wet dog. He went from table to table offering his hand and receiving fillips. Shall I tell it? I who read Péquet sometimes, and who am not his political friend, experienced something which might pass for pity. The poor fellow took everything so gently! He offered so affectionately his poor paws which no one touched cordially. I could not make out from his face whether he was humiliated or content with the terrible familiarity shown him. One person alone did not insult him,—the lady companion of the star. But the star in return, when he went to salute her, bowing almost to the ground, repulsed him in such a fashion that he asked mercy. "My little Nini," he said to her, "don't be as hard toward me as I am devoted to you!» There were tears in the heart of Tigruche, but how could a tear issue from the eye of Péquet?

Nevertheless, such was his accent that Nini herself was touched. «Come,» she said, «Tigruche, go and see if my eggs are ready.» He precipitated himself toward the kitchen, and soon returned sparkling: «My little angel, they are going to serve you.»

This was growing sad; another accident appeared tragic to me.

A waiter planted himself before the lady companion, and asked in a half-bantering tone what he could serve her with. «Nothing,» she said stoically: «I am not hungry.» A fat man with a rather silly air was listening. «You are not hungry!» he said, «and in a minute you'll be picking in our plates.» «If I don't pick in yours,» answered the lady companion, «what does it matter to you?» «Now lose your temper!» went on the fat man. «Why don't you say that you haven't a cent? Every one has seen hard-up days.» «And every one may see them again,» answered the companion more sharply. She added, «I don't ask for anything.»

«No,» said the other, «but you take without asking. Never mind, I'll pay! Order what you want. I like that better than to see you picking a little here and a little there, as you always do.»

But the poor thing—oh, cruel honor!—dared not accept. «If I order, I'll pay. I have money.» I think the woman has been an actress.

The fat man lost patience. «You have money? You? Oh, come now! Ha! ha! Let us see your money, then. Attention, ladies and gentlemen: Dolorès is going to show her money!»

There was silence of a sort. Dolorès glanced around with stormy eyes. Tigruche snatched the star's eggs from the waiter, and placed them before that lady, who attacked them at once. Everybody looked at the companion. A mocking voice arose: «Dolorès, my little one, show us your pretty money!»

Dolorès began to cry. «Stupid thing!» said the fat man.

Dolorès was left in peace. A few minutes later, her eyes dry again, she was picking right and left in her neighbors' plates,—that of the fat man included.

Tigruche, friend of the star, was offered nothing and took nothing: he was as disinterested and as unfortunate as Péquet, the Terror of Princes.

A BON-MOT

From ‹Les Odeurs de Paris›

An actress had lost her mother, whom she adored. She received from the theatre an order to attend a rehearsal. She wrote a touching letter, requesting a few days to give to her grief. The director, furious, fined her.

« Doesn't she mean to play,» he said, « while her mother is dead ? »

This is what is called a *bon-mot*. The journal which cites one is called upon to invent it. There are people whose business it is to make *bons-mots*. They are paid as much as three or four sous a line, and they make some which are not bad. But this director's *bon-mot* was not invented, I think, but fell from the true lips of nature.

BÉTINET, AVENGER OF LETTERS

From ‹Les Odeurs de Paris›

A young man of letters undertakes to prove that bad literature has no effect upon morals; or rather that with reference to morals, there is neither good nor bad literature. He is not pleading his own cause: let us render him that justice! No one ever heard it said that his literature did the least harm; and although he has been writing for some time, he is as innocent as a new-born child. I have a sure presentiment that he will die in his innocence, enveloped in the pages in which he appeared. He is named Bétinet, and he has money.

I am sure of not vexing him by pointing out his attempt; but I desire too that my observations should not make him think too well of himself. In all sincerity the paradox is a little too much for him. It is evident that he cudgels his brains, and works, and does his best. He boldly attacks his adversaries,—those who might believe literature not without influence upon society. He compares them in the first place to dogs who make an « absurd » uproar; then he calls them « a troop of guardians of public morality »; then « the *condottiéri* of the army of good »; then « bastards of Erostratus,» etc. He puts half a dozen of these attacks in each of his paragraphs: and *ahs!* and *hows!* and *eh, good Lords!* everywhere he can; and even elsewhere. As for exclamation points, the article bristles with them. Unfortunately, a point of exclamation cannot take the place of a point of wit. As to the argument, which should be the most carefully prepared part of such a work, there is none.

If I had the honor of knowing young Bétinet, who has money, I would advise him to observe the very serious influence of money upon literature, and the still more serious influence of literature upon money.

Assuredly, assuredly, by means of money there may be success in literature, and a success which may be far-reaching! The world has seen Academicians of the fork,—that is, those who knew how to get themselves elected because they knew how to set a good table. But then that requires a good deal of money, and knowledge how to employ it; for literature devours money. Yes, young Bétinet, it devours money; and when all is devoured there is no more success. And if you count upon the period of success brought about by money,—that you will have made yourself a name to insure success and bring in money,—you are mistaken, young Bétinet. Wealth by way of the kitchen, even had it advanced you to the Academy, would not bring you back more than your fifteen hundred francs and the Cross of Honor. It would not even repay your dinners.

Behold, Bétinet, something upon which to meditate at your leisure.

As to knowing the social effect of the books of Gaivaudin, Papion, and others, and the fate of the old moons, what business is it of yours, and why the devil should people concern themselves with what you think? What difference does it make what you think?

Thus you have already printed three or four volumes and dozens of articles, and supported a crowd of literary men. You have lent them twenty francs, thirty francs, a hundred francs perhaps; and not one of them has had the humanity to inform you that you were not born to enlighten the world, nor to draw ten sous a page for « copy.»

Bétinet, you are deceived!!!

HIC ALIQUIS DE GENTE HIRCOSA

From ‘Les Odeurs de Paris’

THE sergeant was dominating in the car. Around his hairy countenance, ravaged and arrogant, there were only smooth faces, upon which was not even the vestige of a thought. The abbé entered and took the only vacant place opposite the sergeant.

Once seated, the abbé began to read his breviary. The sergeant twisted his beard. Some vague signs appeared upon one of the smooth faces; by close examination a skilled eye could have recognized the writing of Monsieur Guéroult.

The sergeant looked at the abbé, then at the smooth faces, and said: “What I shall never understand is, how a man can be low enough to kneel to another man as guilty as himself and often more so.”

The inspection of a smooth face indicated that this speech was generally approved. Approbation was evident in the face where certain signs already showed themselves: the writing of Adolphus became quite recognizable there.

The abbé raised his gaze, rested it upon the sergeant for a moment, then carried it back to his breviary.

The sergeant continued: “I think that when a man does his duty he leaves a good reputation behind him. A good reputation is paradise,— there is no other; and a bad reputation is hell, and there is no other.”

This speech again appeared (generally) very wise; and even, in view of the abbé's presence, very opportune. For what right has an abbé to thrust himself into a car full of honest folk? Nevertheless, the Guéroult writing protested. The sergeant's eye seemed astonished by this, and became interrogative. The Guéroult writing said: “All the great philosophers have believed in the immortality of the soul.” The sergeant answered, “I tell you, no!”

After a silence he continued: “I will explain what it means to do one's duty: it is to fight and die for France, and to make France triumph. On the battle-field a man should cry ‘Live France,’ and die. And see!

"I care nothing for king, emperor, or republic. I know only France and liberty. See! And I would just as soon thrust my bayonet through the Pope and all the priests, for they are enemies of France and of liberty. See!"

The sergeant went on in this manner, and more eloquently still. He allowed himself a few jovialities. But as he grew very excited, the smooth faces no longer laughed. They feared he might proceed to acts.

The abbé finished saying his breviary.

At the station all the smooth faces dismounted, and at the signal of departure scattered themselves in other compartments. The sergeant alone, and the abbé, resumed their seats. They found themselves tête-à-tête.

The abbé said: "Sergeant, I see that you are a brave soldier. Of the seven men who were here just now, you alone are not afraid to stay in the same compartment with a priest. Honor to French courage!"

The sergeant drew out his pipe, and closed the windows. When the pipe was well lighted, the priest lowered a window, and took his rosary. He showed it to the sergeant: "Sergeant, I hope my rosary does not annoy you?"

The sergeant was no longer so fiery, or so free of voice. He growled, "You neither—you're not afraid!"

"Afraid of what?" said the abbé. "A soldier loves glory; and you said a great many things just now to astonish those fellows: but at heart you're not a bad fellow."

"Nevertheless I would kill you," answered the sergeant.

"Doubtless," said the abbé, "but not in this car."

"Why not in this car?" said the sergeant.

"Because you have no order," said the abbé; "and your promotion would suffer. Moreover, my dear fellow, I would forgive you all the same. Come, sergeant, light your pipe again, and let me tell my beads."

A DUEL

From ‹Les Odeurs de Paris›

NOT long ago we had one of these heroic spectacles. It was very exciting.

The men had stripped to their suspenders and taken their swords in hand. Complications arose. One of the opponents was in doubt as to the other's identity, and thought, not without reason, that a proxy was before him. The seconds argued somewhat hotly; the adversaries, more favorable to peace, separated the seconds. . . . To be concluded at another meeting! At the following meeting the trouble begins again. Postponement. The public is palpitating, the fire is rekindled, the interest increases. Nothing is accomplished; the public talks of nothing else; to-morrow in the field! They strip to their suspenders, they even remove their suspenders; they take swords, cross them, the steel emits sparks. One, two! One, two! They thrust, they ward off. The fencer thrusts, the thruster fences. One, two! Thrusts here, thrusts there, thrusts everywhere! Flic, flac! More thrusts! What thrusts, what fire in the steel, what steel in fire, what fire in the hearts! The sweat pours and is not wiped! At last one of those cruel swords touches one of those cruel men; the blood starts. Stop, rash fellows! Honor is satisfied!

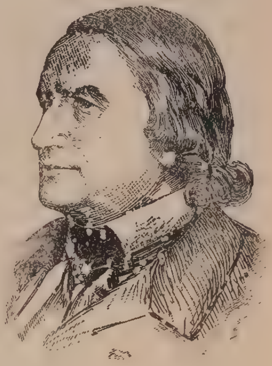
The wounded lost a few hairs of his left eyebrow.

ALFRED DE VIGNY

(1797-1863)

BY GRACE KING

Alfred Victor, Comte de Vigny, is represented in the voluminous literature of his country in the nineteenth century by a mere handful of books: briefly, by two volumes of poetry, 'Poésies Antiques et Modernes' and 'Les Destinées'; by a novel, 'Cinq Mars'; a comedy, 'Quitte pour la Peur' (Let Off with a Scare); a prose epic, 'Stello'; four tales from military life, 'Military Servitude and Grandeur'; a play, 'Chatterton'; and 'The Journal of a Poet.' And in the resounding fame of great contemporaries and successors in literature, De Vigny's name and this handful of books might, with easy supposition, have been relegated to the position of a dwindling and expiring reminiscence of the past; the fate of long catalogues of successful writers and books of his day. De Vigny's name and work, however, have gained rather than lost lustre by the friction of time upon them; and the eulogy by Théophile Gautier, that he was «the purest glory of the romantic school,» is as fresh in its truth to-day, as when it was penned over a half-century ago. Of all the romanticists, he remains, to the critical eyes of to-day, as the most genuine, the most sincere, and the least illogical; in short, as a romanticist by blood, birth, and traditions, not by school or profession of faith.



Alfred de Vigny

He was born at Loches in Touraine, in 1797, the last descendant of a once wealthy and distinguished family. Through his mother, he was connected with great admirals and sea captains; through his father, with courtiers, army officers, and princely seigneurs. Ruined by the Revolution, his parents removed to Paris; where they consecrated their life, and what fortune remained to them, to his education. On the knees of his white-haired father, an old courtier of Louis XV. and a crippled veteran of the Seven Years' War, the child learned to know Louis XV., the great Frederick, Voltaire, and the history of the great campaigns of the past century; and was taught war, he relates, by his father's wounds, by the parchments and escutcheons of his family, by the portraits in armor of his ancestors, — the nobility acting the rôle of a great family of hereditary soldiers.

He was barely sixteen when the Restoration opened to him the predestined career, as he saw it, of the sons of the nobles of France. He entered the household troops of the King, a company composed of young men of family, all graded as sous-lieutenants. But France, as he says, had sheathed her sword «in the scabbard of the Bourbons»: with Napoleon the glory of army life had departed; only the dullness and routine of it remained. To while away the burdensome hours of ennui during his garrison life, the young officer returned to his early and precocious passion for poetry. His haversack library, consisting of the Bible and a few classics, ministered to him as Muse. In 1822 he published the collection of these first essays,—'Poems Ancient and Modern.' It contained some of his best pieces: 'Moses,' 'The Deluge,' 'The Adulterous Woman.' The following year he published his 'Eloa.' The historical novel of 'Cinq Mars' (1826) was however the maker of De Vigny's reputation in literature. Based upon a fine episode of the reign of Louis XIII., its dramatic interest, the virile strength of its characters, its brilliant coloring, and the elevated purity and elegance of its style and language, insured it a success that has been prolonged until the book has become fixed in its reputation as a modern classic.

After fourteen years of pacific and inglorious service, during which he attained only to the rank of captain, De Vigny resigned from the army. In Paris he retired into what Sainte-Beuve wittily called «his ivory tower,» — a life of seclusion, aristocratic and mediæval in its lofty isolation. He emerged but once,—in 1842, to take his seat in the French Academy. He died in 1863, leaving ready for publication a volume of poems, 'Les Destinées,' and a collection of personal notes and reflections which was published by his literary executor as 'The Journal of a Poet.' This last volume contains some of the most exquisite passages of his writings and of his life: the long painful illness of his mother; his devotion, her death, and his grief; and afterwards, the long years of devotion to his invalid wife.

Placed chronologically by birth between Victor Hugo and Lamartine, De Vigny's intrinsic value as a poet receives its best illustration from the juxtaposition. His originality, as Sainte-Beuve says, «is distinct from both, in its inspiration and filiation: we can connect Victor Hugo and Lamartine with anterior French poetry, but in it we vainly seek the parentage of Moses, Eloa, and Dolorida.»

De Vigny's earliest conception of the fatal and sublime gift of genius,— condemning man to solitude and sadness, «imprisoning him in his own greatness," as it has been expressed,—became his master idea through life. It appeared first in 'Moses,' and reappeared in all his writings, poetry and prose, in different reincarnations;—in the 'Maison de Berger,' idyllic, in love; in 'Stello,' tragic, in the sufferings of the modern poet; the idea reaches its culmination in moral grandeur in 'Military Servitude and Grandeur,' where self-abnegation and virile honor are depicted as the only ransom of greatness, and the price of the happiness of the common mortal.

Grace King

MOSES

HE SAID unto the Lord:—"Shall I ne'er be done?
Where wilt thou still that I my footsteps turn?
Am I to live for aye, great, powerful, and alone?
Give me, ah, give me leave to sleep the sleep of earth!
What did I to thee to be chosen thine elect?
Let now some other stand 'twixt thee and thine!
Some other curb thy wild steed, Israel!
I gladly make him heir to book and brazen rod.
Why needest thou have dried up all my hopes?
Why not have left me man in all my ignorance?
Alas! thou madest me wise among the wise:
My finger showed thy wandering race its path,
I called down fire upon the heads of kings,
And future time will kneel before my laws.

I am the Great: my feet tread nations' necks,
My hand holds generations in its will.
Alas, my Lord! I am great—I am alone:
Give me—ah, give me leave to sleep the sleep of earth!"

ELOA

ON THE snowy mountain crown of the hamlet,
The Spaniard has wounded the Asturian eagle
That threatened his white bounding flock.
With bristling plumes, and raining down blood,
The bird strikes upward to heaven, quick as a flash could descend,

Gazing up at his sun! breathing it in with wide-open beak,
As if once again his life to retake from the empire of flame.
In the golden air he swims with great strokes,
Hovers a moment in rest, 'mid the bright darting rays,—
But the aim of the man was too sure:
The hot ball burns like a coal in his wound;
His wing drops its shafts, his royal mantle its plumes;
Dispossessed of his heights, his weight bears him down,—
He sinks into the snow of the mount, with wild heaving breast;
And the cold of the earth, with its heavy death sleep,
Shuts the eyes that held the respect of the sun.

LAURETTE, OR THE RED SEAL

The grand route of Artois and Flanders is long and desolate. It extends in a straight line, without trees, without ditches, through countries flat and covered with yellow mud at all times. In the month of March 1815 I passed along this route, and had a rencontre which I have never since forgotten.

I was alone. My comrades were ahead on the route in the suite of the King, Louis XVIII. I saw their white capes and red capes at the very horizon of the north. A lost shoe retarded my horse. He was young and strong. I urged him on to rejoin my squadron; he started at a rapid trot. It still rained, and I still sang. But I soon stopped, tired of hearing only my own self; and then I heard only the rain, and my horses' feet which plashed the beaten track. On examining intently this yellow line of the road, I remarked at about a quarter of a mile distant a small black point which moved. This gave me pleasure: it was some person. I hurried my steps. At about a hundred paces I could clearly distinguish a little wagon of white wood, covered with three circles and black oilcloth; it resembled a little cradle placed on two wheels; the wheels sank to their hubs in the mud. The little mule which dragged it was carefully led by a man on foot who held the bridle. He was a man of about fifty years, with white mustache, strong and tall. He had a hard but good face, such as is frequently seen in the army. Having seen his white cockade, I contented myself with showing him the sleeve of my red coat, and then he replaced his gun in the cart.—« Will you have a drop? »—« Willingly,» I replied, approaching: «I have not drunk in twenty-four hours.» He had at his neck a cocoanut very well carved, made into a flagon, with a silver mouthpiece, of which he seemed rather proud. He passed it to me, and I drank a little of the bad white wine with much pleasure. I returned the cocoanut to him. We went on for about a quarter of a mile without saying anything. Then as he stopped to rest his poor little mule, which it pained me to look at, I stopped too, to empty my boots of the water which filled them. "Your boots begin to stick to your feet," said he. "It is four nights since I took them off," said I. "Bah! in eight days you will no longer think of them," he replied in his hoarse voice. "Do you know what I have in there?" "No," said I to him.—"It is a woman."—I said, "Ah!" without too much surprise, and I began to walk tranquilly on. He followed me. "You do not care? What I said then ought to astonish you." —"I am but little astonished," I said.—"Oh! but if I should tell you how I left the sea, we should see."—"Well," replied I, "why not try? That would warm you up, and would make me forget that the rain is running down my back and out at my heels." . . .

"You must know first, my boy, that I was born at Brest. I started by being the child of the troop, earning my half-rations and my half-stipend from the age of nine; my father being a soldier in the guards. But as I loved the sea,—on a beautiful night while I was on leave of absence in Brest, I hid myself in the hold of a merchant vessel leaving for the Indies: I was only discovered in mid-ocean, and the captain preferred making me a cabin-boy to throwing me overboard. When the Revolution came I had made my way, and had in my turn become captain of a little merchant vessel,—full of zest, having skimmed the ocean for fifteen years. As the royal ex-marine—ma foi! the good old marine—all of a sudden found itself depopulated of officers, captains were taken from the merchant marine. I had had some filibustering affairs, of which I may tell you later. They gave me command of a brig of war named the Marat. The 28th Fructidor 1797 I received orders to weigh for Cayenne. I was to convey sixty soldiers; and one exile, who was left over from the one hundred and ninety-three taken on board by the frigate La Decade a few days before. I had orders to treat this individual with consideration; and the first letter of the Directoire contained a second, closed with three red seals, one amongst them of unusual size. I was forbidden to open this letter before the first degree of latitude north from the twenty-seventh to the twenty-eighth of longitude,—that is, near to passing the line. This big letter had a shape all its own. It was long, and so tightly closed that I could not read between the angles, nor through the envelope. I am not superstitious, but it made me afraid. . . .

"I was occupied in putting this letter under the glass of the clock when my exile entered my room; he held by the hand a beautiful young girl, about seventeen years old. He told me that he was nineteen; a fine-looking boy, though a little pale, and too white for a man. His little wife was fresh and gay as a child. They looked like two turtle-doves. It gave me pleasure to see them. I said to them, 'Well, my children, you have come to visit the old captain? That is very good of you. I am taking you rather far away, but so much the better: we shall have time to become acquainted. I am sorry to receive madame without my coat, but I was nailing that great rascally letter 'way up there. If you would help me a little?' That made good little children of them. The little husband took the hammer, and the little wife the nails, and they passed them to me as I asked for them; and she called to me, "To the right! to the left! captain!" laughing as she did so, for the pitching made my clock unsteady. 'Ah!' I said, 'little mischief! I shall make your husband scold you, see if I do not.' Then she threw her arms about his neck and kissed him. They were really very nice. We immediately became good friends. The trip was beautiful. I always did have weather made to order. As I had none but black faces on board, I made the two little lovers come to my table every other day. It enlivened me. When we had eaten the biscuits and fish, the little wife and her husband would remain gazing at each other, as if they had never seen one another before. Then I would begin to laugh with all my heart, and make fun of them. They too would laugh with me. You would have laughed too, to see us laughing like three imbeciles, not knowing what was the matter with us. . . . They slept in a hammock, where the vessel would roll them over and over like these two pears, which I have here in my wet handkerchief. They were lively and contented. I did as you do: I did not question. What need was there that I should know their name and their affairs? I was taking them across the sea, as I would have taken two birds of Paradise. . . . I ended after a month by looking on them as my children. All day long, when I called them, they would come and sit by me. The young man wrote at my table,—that is, on my bed: and when I wished it, he would help me to keep my course; he soon knew how to do it as well as I, and I was sometimes forbidden to do it. The young woman would seat herself on a little barrel, and sew. One day as they were thus sitting, I said to them:—

"'Do you know, little friends, that we make a fine family picture as we are now? I do not want to question you; but probably you have not more money than you need, and you are both prodigiously delicate to spade and hoe, as the exiles do in Cayenne. It is an ugly country; I tell you the truth: but I, who am an old wolfskin dried in the sun, I could live there like a lord. If you have, as it seems to me you have (without wishing to question you), a little friendship for me, I will willingly leave my old brig, which is only a sabot now, and establish myself with you, if it would please you. I have no more family than a dog, and that worries me: you would be a little society for me. I would help you in many things: I have saved up a nice little heap, on which we can live, and which I shall leave to you when I come to turn up my eyes, as we say politely.' Astonished, they looked at one another, apparently believing that I had not spoken the truth; then the little one ran, as she always did, threw herself on the bosom of the other, and sat on his knee, all red and weeping. He pressed her close in his arms, and I saw tears in his eyes too; he stretched out his hand to me and became paler than usual. She spoke softly to him, and her long blonde tresses fell on his shoulder; her twist had become undone, like a cable which unrolls suddenly. That hair—if you had seen it! it was like gold.

"As they still spoke low, the young man kissing her brow from time to time, and she weeping, I grew impatient. 'Well, does that suit you?' I said at last. 'But—but, captain, you are very good;' said the husband, 'but—you could not live with deported convicts—' he lowered his eyes.

"'I,' said I, 'do not know what you have done to be exiled; but you shall tell me some day if you choose, or you shall not if you choose. You do not seem to me to have a very heavy conscience; I am very sure that I have done much more in my life than you, poor innocents! For instance, as long as you are under my guard, I shall not let you go: you need not expect it; I would sooner cut your throats as I would two pigeons. But once my epaulet removed, I know no longer either admiral or anything else.'

«'What I am thinking is,' he replied, sadly shaking his brown head, slightly powdered as it was still worn in those days, 'that it would be dangerous for you, captain, to seem to know us. We laugh because we are so young; we seem to be happy because we love each other: but I have some ugly moments when I think of the future, and I do not know what will become of my poor Laure.' He again pressed the young wife's head to his breast. 'That was what I should say to the captain, was it not, my child? Would you not have said the same thing?'

«I took my pipe and got up; for I began to feel my eyes growing moist, and that was not becoming to me.

«'Come, come!' I said: 'that will all be cleared up after a while. If the tobacco is unpleasant to madame, her absence will be necessary.' She arose, her face all on fire and wet with tears, like a child that has been scolded.

«'And yet,' she said, looking at my clock, 'you two do not think about it—that letter!'

«I felt as if something had struck me. I had a kind of pain up under my hair when she said that to me.

«'Pardieu! I did not think of it,' I said. 'Ah, here indeed is a pretty affair! If we have passed the first degree north, all I can do is to throw myself overboard!' I must be lucky: that child reminded me of that devilish letter!

«I looked quickly at my marine map; and when I saw that there was still a week ahead of us, my head felt easier, but not my heart,—I could not tell why.

«'It is because the Directory does not joke about the article obedience!' I said. 'Good! I am once more afloat this time. Time flew so quickly that I had entirely forgotten it.'

«Well, sir, we remained all three with our noses in the air, looking at that letter as if it were going to speak to us. What struck me very much was that the sun, which slipped in through the skylight, lit up the glass of the clock, and made the big red seal and the other little ones seem like features of a face in the midst of fire.

«'Would not one say that the eyes were starting from his head?' I said to amuse them.

«'Oh! my friend,' said the young woman, 'it looks like blood stains.'

“‘Bah! bah!’ said her husband, laying her arm in his, ‘you are mistaken, Laure: it looks like a card of announcement of a marriage Come and rest yourself, come: why let that letter bother you?’

“They went off. I remained alone with that big letter; and I remember that while smoking my pipe, I continued to look at it, as if those red eyes had attached mine to them by drawing them ever as do the eyes of a serpent.

“The night was more beautiful than any I had ever seen in my life so near the tropics The moon rose on the horizon as large as a sun; the sea cut it in half, and became all white, like a cloth of snow covered with little diamonds. I was glad to hear nothing. I love silence and order. I had forbidden all noises and all fires. Nevertheless I perceived a small red line almost under my feet. I should have got into a temper instantly; but as it was in the cabin of my little convicts, I wished to be sure of what they were doing before I grew angry. I had only to bend down: I could see through the big hatchway into the little room, and I looked. The young wife was on her knees praying. A small lamp threw its light on her. I thought I would slip away, but I said, ‘Bah! an old soldier, what does it matter?’ And I remained to see. While she prayed, her husband took the ends of her long hair and kissed them noiselessly. When she had finished she made the sign of the cross, with the air of going to paradise. She got up, kissed him, and stretched herself in the hammock, into which he had tossed her without saying a word, as one sets a child on a seesaw. There was a choking heat: with pleasure she felt herself swinging with the motion of the vessel, and seemed to begin to fall asleep. ‘My friend,’ said she, half asleep, ‘are you not sleepy? Do you know that it is very late?’ . . .

“On a beautiful morning I awoke, astonished to feel no motion of the vessel. We had fallen in a dead calm, and it was on the first degree of north latitude and the twenty-seventh of longitude. I poked my nose out: the sea was as smooth as a bowl of oil. The sails, all spread, fell glued to the masts like empty balloons. I said quickly, ‘I’ve got time enough before me yet to read you,’ looking sideways at the letter. I waited till sundown that night. But it had to come: I opened the clock and quickly took out the sealed order. Well, my dear sir, I held it there for a quarter of an hour before I could make up my mind to read it.

At last I said, 'This is too much!' and I broke the three seals with one thumb-stroke; and the great red seal I ground into dust. After I had read it I rubbed my eyes, thinking I was mistaken. I re-read the letter entirely; I read it over again; I began it again at the last line, and went up to the first. I did not believe it. My legs trembled a little under me; I sat down; I felt a twitching of the skin on my face; I rubbed my cheeks a little with rum, and I poured some in the hollow of my hands, and I pitied myself for being such a fool: but it was only an affair of a moment. I went up into the open air. Laurette was so pretty that day that I did not want to go near her: she wore a little white dress quite simple, her arms bare to the shoulder, and her long hair hanging as she always wore it. . . .

"I made a sign to the young man to come and speak to me on the quarter-deck behind. She turned. I do not know how I looked, but— she took him by the arm violently, and said, 'Oh! do not go: he is so pale!'

"He came, though, close to me on the quarter-deck; she looked at us, leaning against the great mast. We walked to and fro for a long time without speaking. I was smoking a cigar, which I found bitter, and I spat into the water. He followed me with his eyes; I took his arm: I was choking; on my word of honor I was choking.

"'Ah, here!' I said to him, 'tell me something of your history, my little friend. What in the devil have you done to those dogs of lawyers there, setting themselves up like the King's five-franc pieces? They seem to have a bad grudge against you. It's funny!'

"He shrugged his shoulders, hanging his head (with such a sweet air, the poor boy), and said to me:—

"'O my heavens, captain! no great thing, I assure you: three couplets of vaudeville on the Directory, that is all.'

"'Impossible!' I said.

"'O my God, yes! The couplets were not even very good. I was arrested the 15th Fructidor, and conducted to La Force; condemned first to death, then through benevolence to exile.'

"'It is curious,' I said. 'The Directeurs are very susceptible comrades; for that letter, you know, gives me the order to shoot you.'

"He did not answer, but smiled, putting a good enough face on it for a young man of nineteen. He only looked at his wife, and wiped his forehead, from which great drops of sweat fell. I had fully as many on my face, and other drops in my eyes.

"I began again:—

"'It seems to me those citizens did not wish to do this business on land: they thought that here it would be kept more quiet. But it is very hard on me, my child; for though you are a good child, I cannot but obey. The sentence of death is there all regular and correct, the order of execution signed with flourish and seal. Nothing has been left out.'

"He bowed to me politely, blushing.

"'I ask for nothing, captain,' he said in a voice as sweet as usual. 'I should be distressed to make you fail in your duty. I only want to speak a little with Laure, and pray you to protect her in case she should survive me, which I do not believe she will.'

"'Oh, as for that, it's all right, my boy: if it does not displease you, I shall take her to her family on my return to France, and I shall only leave her when she no longer cares to see me. But to my mind, you may flatter yourself that she will never recover from that stroke, poor little woman!'

"'My brave captain, you will suffer more than I in what remains for you to do, I feel sure; but what can we do? I may count upon you to keep for her all that belongs to me, to protect her, to see that she receives what her old mother may leave her, may I not?—to guarantee her life, her honor? And also to see that her health is cared for. See, I must tell you further that she is very delicate,' he added in a lower voice: 'her chest is often affected so that she faints many times a day; she must always wrap herself well. But you will replace her father, her mother, and me, as much as possible, will you not? If she could keep her rings, which her mother gave her, I should be very glad. But if it is necessary to sell them for her, it must be done. My poor Laurette! see how beautiful she is.'

"I pressed his hand as a friend; but he still held mine, and looked at me in a curious way.

"'Look here: if I have any advice to give you,' I added, 'it is not to speak to her about it. We will arrange the thing so that she shall not know it, or you either, be sure of that: that concerns me.'

"'Ah! that is different,' said he: 'I did not know. That would be better indeed. Besides, good-bys, good-bys, they weaken one.'

"'Yes, yes,' I said to him, 'do not be a child: it is better so. Do not embrace her, my friend; do not embrace her if you can help it, or you are lost.'

"It seemed to me that he did not keep the secret well; for they walked arm in arm during a quarter of an hour. . . .

"Night came all of a sudden. It was the moment I had resolved to take. But that moment has lasted for me up to this day, and I shall drag it after me all my life, like a ball."

Here the old commandant was forced to stop. I was careful not to speak, for fear of turning the course of his ideas; he began again, striking himself on the breast:—

"That moment, I tell you—I cannot yet understand it. I felt a fury seizing me by the hair; and at the same time I do not know what made me obey, and pushed me on. I called the officers, and said to one of them, 'Come, a skiff overboard, as we are now executioners! You will put that woman into it, you will take her farther and farther away until you hear gun-shots! Then you will return.' To obey a piece of paper! for after all, that was what it came to. There must have been something in the air which pushed me on. I saw from afar the young man—oh, it was horrible to see—kneel before his Laurette, and kiss her knees, her feet.

"These small boats hold six men," he continued. "They threw themselves into it, and carried Laure off with them, without her having time to cry or speak. Oh! there are things for which no honest man can console himself if he has caused them. There is no use in saying one forgets such things.

"I was speaking to you still, I think, of the little Laurette! Poor woman! How stupid some men are in this world! The officer was fool enough to steer the boat before the brig After this, it is right to say we cannot foresee everything. I counted upon night to hide the business; and I did not count upon the light of twelve guns fired all at once. And, ma foi! from the boat she saw her husband fall into the sea, shot.

"If there is a God up there, he knows how what I am going to tell you happened; as for me, I do not know, but it was seen and heard, as I see and hear you. At the moment of the shot she raised her hand to her head as if a ball had struck her brow, and sat in the boat without fainting, without crying, without speaking, and returned to the brig when they wanted, and as they wanted. I went to her, and spoke to her for a long time, and as well as I could. She seemed to listen to me, and looked me in the face, rubbing her forehead. She did not understand, and her brow was red, and her face all pale. She trembled all over as though afraid of every one. That trembling remains still with her. She is still the same poor little one: idiot, or imbecile, or crazy, as you choose. Never has a word been drawn from her, except when she asks to have taken out what she has in her head.

« From that moment I became as sad as she; and I felt something in me that said to me, 'Stay by her the rest of your days, and take care of her.' I have done it. When I returned to France, I asked to pass with the same rank into the land troops; having a hatred to the sea, because I had thrown into it innocent blood. I sought for Laure's family. Her mother was dead. Her sisters, to whom I took her insane, would have none of her, and proposed to put her into Charenton. I turned my back on them, and kept her with me.

«Ah! my God, comrade, if you wish to see her, it rests only with yourself.»

« Is she in there?» I asked.

« Certainly, here! Wait! ho! ho! mule.» And he stopped his poor mule, which seemed relieved at the command. At the same time he raised the oilcloth of his little cart, as if to arrange the straw which almost filled it; and I saw something very painful. I saw two blue eyes, large beyond measure, admirable in shape, looking out of a pale emaciated face, inundated with straight light hair. She looked at us a moment, trembled, smiled faintly at me. I noticed with astonishment that on her long fingers she had two diamond rings.

PASQUALE VILLARI

(1827–)

IT HAS been said that the history of any given nation can be clearest understood and best written by a member of that nation, as obviously fitted by temperament to enter into that sympathy with the past which is the first requisite of the historian. The truth of this is exemplified in the case of Pasquale Villari, a modern Italian historian, whose noted lives of Savonarola and of Machiavelli owe their value as much to the author's comprehension of the Italian temperament as to his thorough and extensive scholarship. The first volume of the 'Life and Times of Savonarola' was published in 1859, the second in 1861. In writing this history, Villari had to deal with one of the most complex periods of Italian development, when the Renaissance was approaching its zenith, introducing into European life the elements out of which the modern world was to be formed. Like other transitional periods, it was fraught with much that seems inexplicable and contradictory, even to a far-removed generation; furthermore, Villari had to treat of a character concerning the estimate of whose place and work in the world a historian might easily go astray. Savonarola in his perfect simplicity is one of the most unintelligible figures of history, when regarded, as is usually the case, as a mediæval friar of a profound and mystic devotional genius. Villari does not question the genius, but he places Savonarola where he belongs, in the modern and not in the mediæval world.

> «It cannot be denied that he had the spirit of an innovator; and indeed, the main purpose of our work has been to insist on this point. Savonarola was the first to raise the standard announcing the uprisal of the truly original thought of the Renaissance at the close of the great epoch of humanistic learning. He was the first man of the fifteenth century to realize that the human race was palpitating with the throes of a new life; and his words were loudly echoed by that portion of the Italian people still left untainted by the prevalent corruption. He accordingly merits the title of prophet of the new civilization. . . . Columbus discovered the paths of the sea, Savonarola those of the soul; . . . he endeavored to conciliate reason with faith, religion with liberty. His work may be ranked with that of the Council of Constance, of Dante Alighieri, of Arnaldo of Brescia: he aspired to the reform of Christianity and Catholicism that has been the constant ideal of the greatest minds of Italy.»

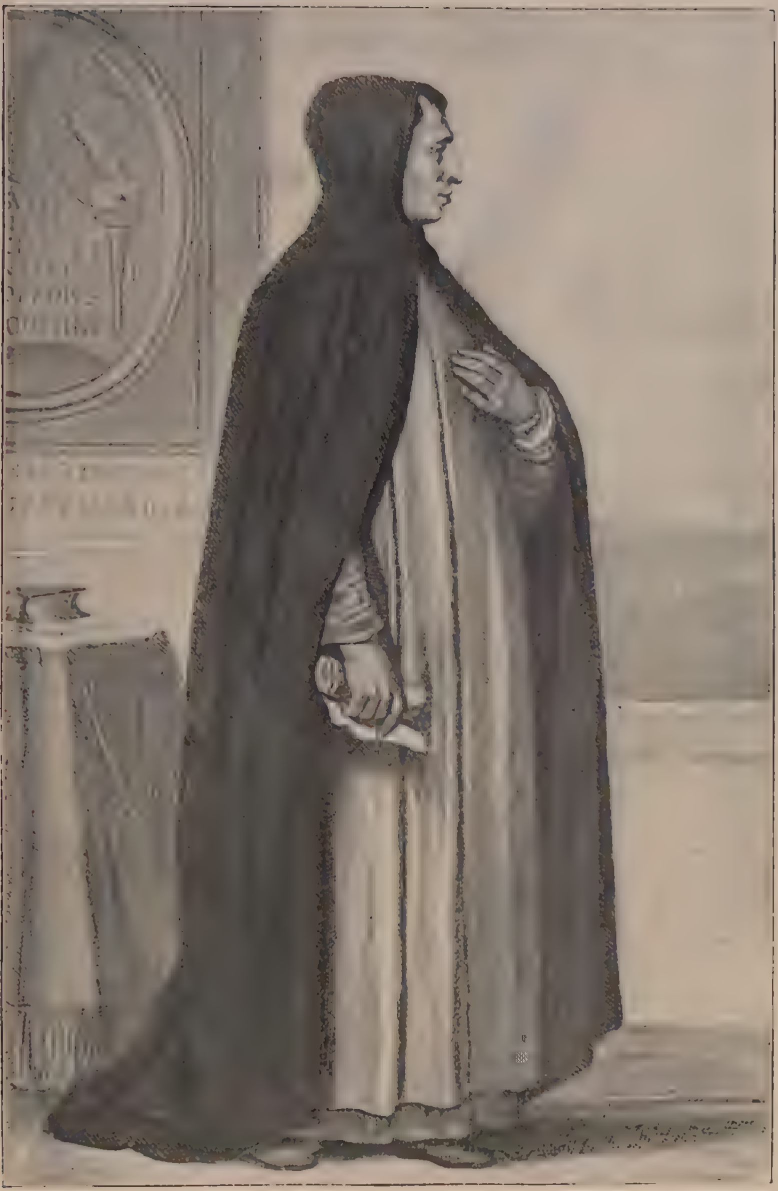
Villari thus renders an enormous service to the life and work of Savonarola. Seen in this light, the Dominican friar of San Marco becomes the embodiment of the better elements of the Renaissance; he perished because his environment was chiefly made up of the lower elements of that great growth in the direction of the new world. A Florence leavened by the Medici surrounded the prophet. Villari has described this environment with wonderful penetration, using the slightest details as explanatory of the central figure. For these reasons his ‘Life of Savonarola’ is pre-eminent among the other biographies of the great Dominican.

In his ‘Niccolo Machiavelli and His Times,’ he approaches his subject in the same rational and sympathetic manner. The first volume of this work is devoted to a survey of the principal Italian States,—Milan, Florence, Venice, Rome, and Naples,—of the political condition of Italy at the end of the fifteenth century, and of the literature of the period. In this way he prepares the reader for a comprehension of the character of Machiavelli, by the comprehension of the social and political conditions which produced him. In his own words, he «studied Machiavellism before Machiavelli.» His estimate of the great politician is singularly original and striking: he proceeds upon the assumption that Machiavelli's noted maxim, «The end justifies the means,» was but a corollary to a much more comprehensive principle,—namely, that the whole is greater than the parts; that the welfare of society is of more importance than the welfare of the individual. He first points out that the political and social state of the Italy of Machiavelli's time was directly productive of the theories of statecraft embodied in ‘The Prince.’ «All private relations were ruled by Christian morality, or at all events professed unquestioning adherence to its precepts; but it was forsaken in public life, where it was supposed to have no practical value. Good faith, loyalty, and Christian goodness would have subjected to certain destruction any prince or government that should have actually obeyed their dictates in political matters. The State would have certainly fallen a prey to the enemy; would perhaps have dissolved into anarchy.» Machiavelli «clearly saw that statecraft has ways and means of its own, which are not the ways and means of private morality: that on the contrary, the morality of private life may sometimes check a statesman in mid-career, and render him vacillating, without his being either a good or a bad man; and that it is mainly vacillation of this kind that leads to the downfall of States. There must be no vacillation, he said, but a daring adoption of the measures demanded by the nature of events. Such measures will always be justified when the end is obtained. And the end in view must be the welfare of the State. He who obtains this, if even he be a wicked man, may be condemned for his wickedness; but as a prince he will deserve everlasting glory. . . . Such is the true meaning of Machiavelli's maxim, that the end justifies the means.» Villari concludes his history by demonstrating that Machiavelli's conception of Italy's needs was essentially a true one.

> «Italy had become incapable of a religious reformation like that accomplished in Germany. Instead of springing towards God, as Savonarola had predicted; instead of seeking strength in a new conception of faith, she aimed at a recomposition of the idea of the State and the motherland. She saw in the sacrifice of all to the universal good the only possible way of political and moral redemption. The unity of the regenerated country would have inevitably led to the re-establishment of morality; would have rekindled faith in public and private virtue, and discovered a method of sanctifying the purpose of life. This idea, vaguely and feebly felt by many, was the ruling thought of Machiavelli. . . . At the present day, when Italy's political redemption has begun, and the nation is constituted according to the prophecies of Machiavelli, the moment has at last come for justice to be done to him.»

Villari himself has had that acquaintance with public affairs which is invaluable to the historian. Born in Naples in 1827, he became involved in the revolutionary movement which broke out in Naples in 1848, and took refuge in Florence. His exile proved of great benefit to him as a historian, his researches in the archives of the city leading him to write the histories of Savonarola and Machiavelli. After the publication of the former work, the chair of modern history in the University of Pisa was bestowed upon him. In 1862 he published a work on ‹Latin and English Civilization›; in 1877 the first volume, and in 1882 the second volume, of ‹Niccolo Machiavelli› were published. ‹Critical Essays› appeared in 1876, and ‹Art, History, and Philosophy› in 1884. He also wrote political pamphlets, some of which had great popularity. In 1866 he was sent to the Italian Parliament by the electors of Arezzo, but he did not become prominent as a politician. He is now professor of modern history in the Florentine Institute; he is also a member of the Superior Council of Public Instruction.

‹The Life of Savonarola› and ‹Niccolo Machiavelli› have been translated into English by the wife of Villari. The style of these works is clear, forcible, and in the best sense popular.



SAVONAROLA

SAVONAROLA

From ‹Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola›

Savonarola was of middle height, of dark complexion, of a sanguineo-bilious temperament, and of a most high-strung nervous system. His dark gray eyes were very bright, and often flashed fire beneath his black brows; he had an aquiline nose and a large mouth. His thick lips were compressed in a manner denoting a stubborn firmness of purpose; his forehead, already marked with deep furrows, indicated a mind continually absorbed in meditation of serious things. But although his countenance had no beauty of line, it expressed a severe nobility of character, while a certain melancholy smile indued his harsh features with so benevolent a charm as to inspire confidence at first sight. His manners were simple, if uncultured; his language rough and unadorned. But on occasion his homely words were animated by a potent fervor that convinced and subdued all his hearers.

While in the monastery of St. Dominic he led a silent life, and became increasingly absorbed in spiritual contemplation. He was so worn by fasting and penance that when pacing the cloisters, he seemed more like a spectre than a living man. The hardest tests of the novitiate seemed light to him, and his superiors were frequently obliged to curb his zeal. Even on days not appointed for abstinence he scarcely ate enough to support life. His bed was a grating with a sack of straw on it and one blanket; his clothing of the coarsest kind, but strictly clean; in modesty, humility, and obedience he surpassed all the rest of the brethren. The fervor of his devotion excited the wonder of the superiors, and his brother monks often believed him to be rapt in a holy trance. The cloister walls seemed to have had the effect of restoring his peace of mind by separating him from the world, and to have purified him of all desires save for prayer and obedience. . . .

In the year 1481, serious alarms of war were threatening Ferrara from all sides. Already many of the inhabitants had fled, and before long the university in which the Dominicans taught theology was closed. Thereupon, either from economy or as a measure of precaution, the superior of the order dispatched the greater part of his monks elsewhere. Savonarola was directed to go to Florence; he thus bade a last farewell to his family, friends, and native town,—for he was destined never to see them again. . . .

On this, his first arrival in Florence, in 1481, he entered the monastery of St. Mark, where the brightest and also the saddest years of his life were to be passed. And inasmuch as the name of Savonarola is always associated with that of St. Mark, it will be well to say a few words on the convent's history.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century it was a poor, half-ruined building, inhabited by a few monks of the order of St. Sylvester, whose scandalous life occasioned numerous complaints to be laid before the Court of Rome. Finally, Cosimo the Elder obtained the papal permission to remove these monks elsewhere, and granted the house to the reformed Dominicans of the Lombard congregation. Then, deciding to rebuild it, he charged the celebrated architect, Michelozzo Michelozzi, with the work; and six years later, in 1443, the monastery was finished at a cost of 36,000 florins. Cosimo was never sparing of expense for churches, monasteries, and other public works fitted to spread the fame of his munificence and increase his popularity. While the convent was in course of erection, he had been very generous in helping the Dominicans; and now that the work was so successfully completed, he was not satisfied until he could endow them with a valuable library. This, however, was a difficult undertaking and one of considerable expense; since it was a question of collecting manuscripts, which just then commanded exorbitant prices. But the opportune decease of Niccolò Niccoli, the greatest manuscript-collector in Europe, enabled Cosimo to fulfill his purpose. Niccoli had been one of the most learned men of his day, and spent his whole life and fortune in acquiring a store of codices that was the admiration of all Italy. He had bequeathed this treasure to Florence; but having also left many debts behind him, his testamentary dispositions had not been carried out. Accordingly Cosimo paid off the debts; and reserving a few of the more precious codices for himself, intrusted the rest of the collection to the monastery of St. Mark. This was the first public library established in Italy; and the monks kept it in such excellent order as to prove themselves worthy of the charge. St. Mark's became almost a centre of erudition; and being joined to the congregation of the Lombard Dominicans, the more learned brothers of the order resorted to Florence, and increased the new convent's renown. The most distinguished men of the time frequently came to St. Mark's to enjoy conversation with the friars. It was during these years that Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, better known as Fra Beato Angelico, was employed in covering the convent walls with his incomparable works. But above all their treasures of art and learning, the brethren chiefly gloried in their spiritual father and founder, St. Antonine. . . .

During his first days in Florence, Savonarola was accordingly half intoxicated with delight. He was charmed by the smiling landscape, the soft lines of the Tuscan hills, the elegance of the Tuscan speech. Even before reaching the town, the gentle manner of the country-folk he met on the way had predisposed him to expect happiness in this fairest of Italian cities, where art and nature contend for the palm of beauty. To his deeply religious mind, Florentine art seemed the expression of a divine harmony, a proof of the omnipotence of genius when inspired by faith. The paintings of Fra Angelico appeared to have filled the cloisters of St. Mark with a company of angels; and as he gazed upon them, the friar felt transported into a blessed sphere like unto the world of his dreams. The sacred memories of Antonine; the saint's deeds of charity, still enduring and still venerated by the brotherhood; the friars themselves, so superior in culture and refinement to any that he had yet known,—all combined to make him believe his lot cast among real brethren of the soul. His heart expanded with ingenuous hopes; he forgot all past disappointments, and did not anticipate the still sadder trials awaiting him when he should have been long enough in Florence to understand better the nature of its inhabitants. . . .

At the time of Savonarola's coming, Lorenzo the Magnificent had reigned in Florence for many years, and was then at the height of his power and fame. Under his rule all things wore an air of prosperity and well-being. The factions which had so frequently distracted the city had long been extinguished; all refusing to bend beneath the Medicean yoke were either imprisoned, exiled, or dead: and general tranquillity reigned. Continually occupied with festivities, dances, and tournaments, the Florentines, once so jealous of their rights, seemed now to have forgotten the very name of freedom. . . .

After the first few days in Florence, Savonarola was again oppressed by a feeling of isolation. Intimacy with the inhabitants quickly betrayed the confirmed skepticism and flippancy hidden beneath their great intellectual culture. The general absence of principle and faith once more threw him back upon himself; and his disgust was all the greater in consequence of the lofty hopes with which he had entered Florence. Even among the brethren of St. Mark's there was no real religious feeling; for although the name of St. Antonine was so often on their lips, it was uttered in a vainglorious rather than a loving spirit. But above all, his indignation was aroused by the much-vaunted studies of the Florentines. It was a new and horrible experience to him to hear them wrangling over the precepts of Plato and Aristotle, without caring or even perceiving that from party spirit, and in the heat of discussion, they were denying the most essential principles of the Christian faith. Accordingly he began from that moment to regard all these men of letters, erudites, and philosophers, with a sort of angry contempt; and this feeling increased in strength to the point of often leading him to disparage the very philosophy in which, by many years of strenuous labor, he was himself so thoroughly versed.

But in no case would it have been possible for him to have long retained the sympathy of the Florentines, inasmuch as they were held apart from the newly arrived friar by an irreconcilable diversity of temperament. Everything in Savonarola came from the heart; even his intellect was ruled by its generous impulse: but his manners and speech were rough and unadorned. He spoke with a harsh accent, expressed himself in a homely way, and made use of lively and almost violent gesticulations. Now, the Florentines preferred preachers of scholarly refinement of gesture, expression, and style, able to give an unmistakable imitation of some ancient writers and copious quotations from others: as to the gist of the sermon, they cared little about it; often indeed conferring most praise on the speaker who allowed them to see that he had little belief in religion. Savonarola, on the contrary, thundered forth furious diatribes against the vices of mankind, and the scanty faith of clergy and laity; he spoke disparagingly of poets and philosophers, condemned the strange craze for ancient authors, and quoting from no book save the Bible, based all his sermons on its texts. Now, there were few

Florentines who read the Bible at all; since, finding its Latin incorrect, they were afraid of corrupting their style.

Having entered the convent of St. Mark towards the end of 1481, the following year Savonarola was charged by the friar with the instruction of the novices, and applied himself to the task with his accustomed zeal. Continually dominated by the same mystic enthusiasm, he constantly exhorted his pupils to study the Scriptures; and often appeared among them with tear-swollen eyes, and wrought almost to ecstasy by prolonged vigils and fervid meditation. . . .

He retained his modest post of lecturer to the novices, up to the Lent of 1486, when he was sent to preach in various cities of Lombardy, and especially in Brescia. Here, with the Book of Revelation for his theme, he found it easier to stir the sympathies of his hearers. His words were fervent, his tone commanding, and he spoke with a voice of thunder; reproving the people for their sins, denouncing the whole of Italy, and threatening all with the terrors of God's wrath. He described the forms of the twenty-four elders, and represented one of them as rising to announce the future calamities of the Brescians. Their city, he declared, would fall a prey to raging foes; they would see rivers of blood in the streets; wives would be torn from their husbands, virgins ravished, children murdered before their mothers' eyes: all would be terror and fire and bloodshed. His sermon ended with a general exhortation to repentance, inasmuch as the Lord would have mercy on the just. The mystic image of the elder made a deep impression upon the people. The preacher's voice seemed really to resound from the other world; and his threatening predictions awakened much alarm. During the sack of Brescia in 1512 by the ferocious soldiery of Gaston de Foix,—when, it is said, about six thousand persons were put to the sword,—the inhabitants remembered the elder of the Apocalypse and the Ferrarese preacher's words.

The great success of these Lenten sermons at last made the name of Savonarola known to all Italy, and decided the course of his life; for henceforward he no longer doubted his mission. Yet such was the goodness and candor of his nature, that self-confidence only made him more modest and humble. His ardor for prayer, his faith and devout exultation, rose to so great a height, that as his companion, Fra Sabastiano of Brescia, says, Savonarola, when engaged in prayer, frequently fell into a trance;

after celebrating mass, was so transported with holy fervor as to be obliged to retire to some solitary place; and a halo of light was often seen to encircle his head.

Savonarola remained in Lombardy until the January of 1489, and during that period wrote to his mother from Pavia a long and most affectionate letter. In this he begs her to forgive him if he has nothing but prayers to offer to his family, since his religious profession precludes him from helping them in other ways; but he adds that in his heart he still shares their sorrows and their joys. "I have renounced this world, and have become a laborer in my Master's vineyard in many cities, not only to save my own soul, but the souls of other men. If the Lord has intrusted the talent to me, I must needs use it as he wills; and seeing that he hath chosen me for this sacred office, rest ye content that I fulfill it far from my native place, for I bear better fruit than I could have borne at Ferrara. There it would be with me as it was with Christ, when his countrymen said, 'Is not this man a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter?' But out of my own place this has never been said to me; rather, when I have to depart, men and women shed tears, and hold my words in much esteem. I thought to have written only a few lines; but love hath caused my pen to run on, and I have opened my heart to you far more than was my purpose. Know, then, that this heart of mine is more than ever bent on devoting soul and body, and all the knowledge granted to me by God, to his service and my neighbors' salvation; and since this work was not to be done in my own land, I am fain to perform it elsewhere. Encourage all to righteous living. I depart for Genoa this day."

Of Savonarola's preachings in Genoa nothing is known to us. But we know that in the summer of 1489 he was suddenly recalled by his superiors to Florence, and strangely enough, at the express desire of Lorenzo de' Medici. The prince made the request in order to gratify his favorite friend, Pico della Mirandola, who had earnestly pressed him to do so. . . .

In the Lent of 1491 Savonarola preached in the Duomo, and his voice echoed for the first time within the walls of Santa Maria del Fiore. From that moment he would seem to have become paramount in the pulpit, and master of the people; who flocked to hear him in increasing numbers, and with redoubled enthusiasm. The friar's imagery enchanted the popular fancy; his threats of coming chastisement had a magical effect upon the minds of all, for it truly seemed that all were already oppressed by evil presentiments. His recently published writings likewise assured his influence over distinguished men who had hitherto stood hesitatingly aloof; but this did not prevent him from condemning, in the plainest and most decided terms, the skepticism and corruption of the most celebrated *literati* of the time.

All this naturally caused much annoyance to Lorenzo de' Medici, and roused the hostility of his friends. . . . He was already styled a tyrant by many, and universally charged with having corrupted the magistrates, and appropriated public and private funds. Therefore it was plain that the friar had dared to make allusion to him. Nevertheless this audacity served to increase Savonarola's fame, and in the July of 1491 he was elected Prior of St. Mark's. This new office, while raising him to a more prominent position, also gave him greater independence. He at once refused to conform to an abuse that had been introduced in the convent: namely, that the new prior must go to pay his respects, and as it were do homage, to the Magnificent. "I consider that my election is owed to God alone," he said, "and to him alone will I vow obedience." Lorenzo was deeply offended by this, and exclaimed, "You see! a stranger has come into *my house*, yet he will not stoop to pay me a visit." Nevertheless, being reluctant to wage war with the prior of a convent, or attach too much importance to a monk, he sought to win him over by kindness. He went several times to hear mass in St. Mark's, and afterwards walked in the garden; but Savonarola could not be persuaded to leave his studies in order to bear him company. When the friars ran to tell him of Lorenzo's presence, he replied, "If he does not ask for me, let him go or stay at his pleasure." He was very severe in his judgment of Lorenzo's character; and knowing the harm wrought on public morals by the prince, had no wish to approach a tyrant whom he regarded not only as the foe and destroyer of freedom, but as the chief obstacle to the restoration of Christian life among the people. Lorenzo then began to send rich gifts and generous alms to the convent. But this naturally increased Savonarola's previous contempt for his character. And he alluded to the circumstance in the pulpit, when saying that a faithful dog does not leave off barking in his master's defense, because a bone is thrown to him. Nevertheless, soon after this he found a large sum of money in gold in the convent alms-box; and persuaded that

Lorenzo was the donor, immediately sent it all to the congregation of the good men of St. Martin for distribution among the poor, saying that silver and copper sufficed for the needs of his brethren. Thus, as Burlamacchi remarks, « Lorenzo was at last convinced that this was not the right soil in which to plant vines. »

But Lorenzo refused to be checked by this rebuff; and presently sent five of the weightiest citizens in Florence to Savonarola, in order to persuade him to change his behavior and manner of preaching, by pointing out the dangers he was incurring for himself and his convent. But Savonarola soon cut short their homily by saying, « I know that you have not come of your own will, but at that of Lorenzo. Bid him to do penance for his sins; for the Lord is no respecter of persons, and spares not the princes of the earth. » And when the five citizens hinted that he might be sent into exile, he added, « I fear not sentences of banishment, for this city of yours is like a mustard-seed on the earth. But the new doctrine shall triumph, and the old shall fall. Although I be a stranger, and Lorenzo a citizen, and indeed the first in the city, I shall stay, while he will depart. » He then spoke in such wise on the state of Florence and Italy, that his hearers were amazed by his knowledge of public affairs. It was then that he predicted before many witnesses, in the sacristy of St. Mark, that great changes would befall Italy, and that the Magnificent, the Pope, and the King of Naples were all near unto death. . . .

Lorenzo de' Medici had retired to his pleasant country-house at Careggi. He was wasting away from severe internal disease, and by the beginning of April 1492 all hope of his recovery was at an end. . . . As his last moments drew near, all his sins rose before him in increasing magnitude, became more and more threatening. The last offices of religion were powerless to conquer his terrors; for having lost all faith in mankind, he could not believe in his confessor's sincerity. Accustomed to see his slightest wish obeyed and all the world bow to his will, he could not realize that any one would dare to deny him absolution. Accordingly the blessing of the Church was powerless to lighten the weight burdening his conscience, and he was more and more cruelly tortured by remorse. « No one has ever dared to refuse me anything, » he thought to himself; and thus the idea that had once been his chief pride became his worst torment.

Suddenly, however, he thought of Savonarola's stern face; here, he remembered, was a man who had been equally unmoved by his threats and his blandishments, and thereupon he exclaimed, « I know no honest friar save this one; » and expressed his desire to confess to Savonarola. A messenger was instantly dispatched to St. Mark's. The prior was so astounded by the strange and unexpected summons that he almost refused to believe it, and answered that it seemed useless for him to go to Careggi, since no words of his would be acceptable to Lorenzo. But on learning the sick man's desperate condition and earnest desire to confess to him, he set forth without delay.

On that day Lorenzo had thoroughly realized that his end was at hand. He had sent for his son Piero, and given him his final counsels and last farewells. His friends were dismissed during this interview: but when they were allowed to return to the room, and had persuaded Piero to go back home, as his presence agitated his father too much, Lorenzo expressed a wish to see Pico della Mirandola once more; and the latter immediately came to him. The sweet aspect of the kindly, gentle young man seemed to have a soothing effect upon him; for he said, « I should have been very sorry to die without first being cheered a little by thy presence. » And thereupon his face grew calm, his discourse almost cheerful; and he began to laugh and jest with his friend. Pico had scarcely left the room before Savonarola entered it, and respectfully approached the bed of the dying prince. Lorenzo explained that there were three sins on his conscience which he was specially anxious to confess, in order to be absolved from them: the sack of Volterra; the robbery of the Monte delle Fanciulle, whereby so many girls had been driven to a life of shame; and the bloody reprisals following the conspiracy of the Pazzi. In speaking of these things, even before beginning his private confession, the Magnificent again fell into great agitation; and Savonarola sought to calm him by repeating, « God is good, God is merciful — » « But, » he added, directly Lorenzo had ceased speaking, « three things are needful. » « What things, Father? » replied Lorenzo. Savonarola's face grew stern, and extending the fingers of his right hand, he began thus: « First, a great and living faith in God's mercy. » — « I have the fullest faith in it. » — « Secondly, you must restore all your ill-gotten wealth, or at least charge your sons to restore it in your name." At this the Magnificent seemed to be struck with surprise and grief; nevertheless, making an effort, he gave a nod of assent. Savonarola then stood up; and whereas the dying prince lay cowering with fear in his bed, he seemed to soar above his real stature as he said, "Lastly, you must restore liberty to the people of Florence." His face was solemn; his voice almost terrible; his eyes, as if seeking to divine the answer, were intently fixed on those of Lorenzo, who, collecting all his remaining strength, angrily turned his back on him without uttering a word. Accordingly Savonarola left his presence without granting him absolution, and without having received any actual and detailed confession. The Magnificent remained torn by remorse, and soon after breathed his last, on April 8th, 1492.

Through the influence of Savonarola the aspect of the city was completely changed. The women threw aside their jewels and finery, dressed plainly, bore themselves demurely; licentious young Florentines were transformed, as by magic, into sober, religious men; pious hymns took the place of Lorenzo's carnival songs. The townsfolk passed their leisure hours seated quietly in their shops, reading either the Bible or Savonarola's works. All prayed frequently, flocked to the churches, and gave largely to the poor. Most wonderful of all, bankers and tradesmen were impelled by scruples of conscience to restore ill-gotten gains, amounting to many thousand florins. All men were wonder-struck by this singular and almost miraculous change. . . . Many new converts asked leave to join the Tuscan congregation; and the number of brethren wearing the robe of St. Mark was incredibly multiplied. . . .

The mode of these men's conversion is likewise worthy of special remark; since it proves that Savonarola, instead of encouraging sudden resolves and fits of enthusiasm, always proceeded with the utmost caution. We find an example of this in the account given by the Florentine Bettuccio, more generally known as Fra Benedetto, of his own conversion. He was the son of a goldsmith, exercising the then profitable art of miniature painting; was in the prime of youth, of a joyous temperament, full of dash and courage, prompt to quarrel, a singer, musician, and poet, fond of good living, and entirely devoted to pleasure. Consequently he was a favorite guest in the gayest society, and led a life of frivolous gallantry. . . .

Such was the life led by Bettuccio, the miniature-painter, when Savonarola began to be renowned, and all Florence flocked to his sermons. Bettuccio, however, refused to follow the herd; for he was on the side of the Arrabbiati, and joined in their scoffs against the Piagnoni. But one day when in the house of a noble and beautiful matron, the latter spoke of Savonarola's sermons in the warmest terms. He laughed at the time; but on another day he was induced by the lady's persuasions to accompany her to the Duomo. He describes his deep confusion on entering the church, and finding himself among so great a company of believers, who stared at him with astonishment. At first he longed to escape, but somewhat reluctantly decided to remain. And as soon as Savonarola mounted the pulpit, everything seemed changed to him. Having once fixed his eyes on the preacher, he was unable to withdraw them; his attention was powerfully arrested, his mind impressed: and then he says, "At last I knew myself to be as one dead rather than living." When the sermon was over, he wandered forth into lonely places; "and for the first time I turned my mind to my inner self." After long meditation he went home, and became a changed man. He threw aside his songs and musical instruments, forsook his companions, and discarded his scented attire. . . .

From that day he was one of the most assiduous of Savonarola's hearers, frequented the convent of St. Mark, repeated prayers and litanies, and even beheld strange visions and heard heavenly voices in the air. "I had a hard struggle with my companions," he tells us, "who went about making mock of me; and a still harder struggle with my own passions, which, breaking loose again from time to time, assailed me very fiercely." At last, when he felt sure of himself, he sought the austere prior of St. Mark's and cast himself at his feet. His voice trembled, he could scarcely utter a word in the presence of him to whom he owed his regeneration; nevertheless he stammered forth his desire to join the brotherhood. Savonarola reasoned with him on the danger of precipitate resolves, the difficulties of the monastic life; and concluded by counseling him to make a better trial of himself by leading a Christian life in the world, before crossing the convent threshold. The advice proved to be needed; for Bettuccio had again to fight against the violence of his passions, and was not always victorious in the struggle.

After doing severe penance for these fresh lapses, and when assured by long trial of having really mastered the flesh, he returned to Savonarola in a calmer frame of mind. But the latter, who had kept him carefully in sight, would not yet allow him to assume the monastic robe, sending him instead to minister to the sick and bury the dead. . . .

From time to time he was summoned to the friar's cell, to receive advice and hear lectures on the monastic life; finally, on the 7th of November, 1495, he put on the robe, and on the 13th of November of the following year took the full vows, and assumed the name of Fra Benedetto.

This was how Savonarola gained one of the most faithful of his followers, one of the most steadfast in the hour of peril, and who preserved to the last an increasing admiration and almost worship for his master. The friar was equally cautious in his advice to others, and never pressed any one to join the brotherhood. His only concern was for the improvement of manners, the diffusion of morality, and the regeneration of the true doctrines of Christ, to which men's souls appeared dead. It was to this end that he now specially dedicated his whole time and strength, his entire heart and soul. When preaching on the holy life and Christian virtue, his soul almost seemed to shine forth from his eyes, and his spiritual energy to be transfused by his voice into the people, who daily and visibly improved under his beneficent influence. Contemporary writers never cease expressing their wonder at this quasi-miracle: some are edified by the triumph thus achieved by religion, others regret the days of joyous ballads and carnival songs; but all are equally emphatic as to the change in public manners, and acknowledge that it was solely the work of Fra Girolamo Savonarola. . . .

The Carnival of 1496 was now at hand; and the friar being silenced, the Arrabbiati were preparing to celebrate it in the old Medicean style, in order to vent the unbridled passions and filthy lusts, which as they thought had too long been repressed. And thereupon the friar determined to thwart them even in this matter.

But it proved a harder task than might have been expected. The Florentines had always been given to carnival festivities; and under the Medici, had indulged in these pleasures to an unlimited and almost incredible extent. During this holiday period the whole city was a scene of wild revelry; drunkenness and debauchery prevailed, and public decorum was cast to the winds. Savonarola's sermons had undoubtedly wrought a great change; but certain carnival customs were so deeply rooted that neither new doctrines, altered laws, nor the severe prohibitions of the magistrates had availed to extirpate them. And as was only natural, the boys of Florence took special delight in these revels. They were accustomed, during those days, to continually stop people in the streets by barring the road with long poles, and refusing to remove them until they had extorted enough money to pay for their mad feastings by night. After these carousals they made bonfires in the squares, round which they danced and sang, and finally pelted one another with stones in so brutal a fashion that no year passed without some of the combatants being left dead on the ground. This "mad and bestial game of stones," as the chroniclers style it, was frequently forbidden, and the players threatened with the severest penalties; but none of these measures had the slightest effect. All the leading citizens, the Eight, even the Signory itself, had exhausted their efforts in vain. By nightfall the boys were so excited with the revels of the day that no penalty availed to keep them in check. At last Savonarola undertook the task. After the brilliant results achieved during the past years in the reformation of politics and morals, and being prevented by the changed condition of affairs from continuing those important crusades, he planned a third and simpler reform, that he styled "the reform of the children."

Foreseeing that it would be extremely difficult to entirely abolish the old customs, he decided to transform them by substituting religious for carnival gayeties. Accordingly, at the same street corners where the children formerly assembled to demand money for their banquets, he caused small altars to be erected, before which they were to take their stand and beg contributions; not, however, for purposes of self-indulgence, but for alms to the poor. Sing as much as ye will, he said to the boys, but sing hymns and sacred lauds instead of indecent songs. He wrote some hymns for them himself,—thus returning to the poetical pursuits which he had so long forsaken,—and commissioned the poet Girolamo Benivieni to compose other verses of the same sort. Then, that all might be conducted with due decorum, he charged Fra Domenico to collect all the children, and choose some leaders from among them, and several of the latter waited on the Signory to explain the proposed reform. Having obtained the sanction of the government, the boys of Florence, exulting in their novel importance, eagerly undertook their appointed work. The city was by no means quiet even in this carnival, nor was it possible to walk the streets without molestation; but although the children were as importunate as of old, it was now for the charitable aim prescribed by Savonarola. And thus, in the year 1496, the game of stones was suppressed for the first time; there was no more gluttonous feasting, and three hundred ducats were collected for the poor. Then, on the last day of carnival, a grand procession was arranged, in which, attracted by the novelty of the thing, the whole population took part. The children went through the city singing hymns and entering all the principal churches; after which they handed over the sums collected to the "good men of St. Martin," for distribution among the "modest poor" [*poveri vergognosi*]. Some objections were raised by those who always murmured against every good work that proceeded from Savonarola; but the greater part of the citizens, and all worthy men, declared that the friar had again achieved a task in which every one else in Florence had failed. . . .

It was one of those moments in which the popular aspect seems to undergo a magical change. Savonarola's adherents had either disappeared or were in hiding; all Florence now seemed against him. . . .

The morning of the 8th of April, Palm Sunday, 1498, passed quietly; but it was easy for an observant eye to discern that this tranquillity was only the sullen calm that precedes a storm, and that it was a marvel no startling event had yet occurred. Savonarola preached in St. Mark's, but his sermon was very short and sad; he offered his body as a sacrifice to God, and declared his readiness to face death for the good of his flock. Mournfully, but with much composure, he took leave of his people; and in giving them his benediction, seemed to feel that he was addressing them for the last time. . . . The friar's adherents then hurried to their homes to procure arms; while a portion of their adversaries held the corners of the streets, and all the rest marched through the city, crying "*To St. Mark's, to St. Mark's, fire in hand!*" They assembled on the Piazza of the Signory; and when their numbers had sufficiently increased, moved in the direction of the convent, brandishing their weapons and uttering fierce cries. On the way they caught sight of a certain man, named Pecori, who was quietly walking to the church of the Santissima Annunziata, singing psalms as he went; and immediately some of them rushed after him, crying, « Does the hypocrite still dare to mumble! » And overtaking him on the steps of the Innocenti, they slew him on the spot. A poor spectacles-maker, hearing the great noise in the street, came out with his slippers in his hand; and while trying to persuade the people to be quiet, was killed by a sword-thrust in his head. Others shared the same fate; and in this way, infuriated by the taste of blood, the mob poured into the Square of St. Mark. Finding the church thronged with the people who had attended vespers, and were still engaged in prayer, they hurled a dense shower of stones through the door; whereat a general panic ensued, the women shrieked loudly, and all took to flight. In a moment the church was emptied; its doors, as well as those of the convent, were locked and barred; and no one remained within save the citizens who were bent on defending St. Mark's.

Although barely thirty in number, these comprised some of the most devoted of Savonarola's adherents; the men who had escorted him to the pulpit, and were ever prepared to risk their life in his service. For some days past they had known that the convent was in danger; and accordingly eight or ten of them had always come to guard it by night. Without the knowledge of Savonarola or Fra Domenico, whom they knew to be averse to all deeds of violence, they had, by the suggestion of Fra Silvestro and Fra Francesco de' Medici, secretly deposited a store of arms in a cell beneath the cloister. Here were some twelve breastplates, and as many helmets; eighteen halberds, five or six crossbows, shields of different kinds, four or five harquebusses, a barrel of powder, and leaden bullets, and even, as it would seem, two small mortars. Francesco Davanzati, who had furnished almost all these weapons, and was then in the convent, brought out and distributed them to those best able to use them. Assisted by Baldo Inghirlami, he directed the defense for some time; placing guards at the weakest points, and giving the necessary orders. About sixteen of the friars took arms, and foremost among them were Fra Luca, son of Andrea della Robbia, and our Fra Benedetto. It was a strange sight to see some of these men, with breastplates over their Dominican robes and helmets on their heads, brandishing enormous halberds, and speeding through the cloister with shouts of "Viva Cristo!" to call their companions to arms.

Savonarola was deeply grieved by this, and Fra Domenico went about imploring all to cast aside their weapons. "They must not stain their hands in blood; they must not disobey the precepts of the gospel, nor their superior's commands." So he cried, but all was in vain; for at that moment the furious yells outside rose to a deafening pitch, and more determined attacks were made on the gates. It was then that Savonarola resolved to end the fruitless and painful struggle by the sacrifice of his own safety; so, assuming his priest's vestments, and taking a cross in his hand, he said to his companions, "Suffer me to go forth, since through me *orta est hæc tempestas*" (this storm has risen); and wished to surrender himself to his enemies at once. But he was met by universal cries of despair; friars and laymen pressed round him with tears and supplications. "No! do not leave us! you will be torn to pieces; and what would become of us without you?" When he saw his most trusted friends barring the way before him, he turned about and bade all follow him to the church. First of all he carried the Host in procession through the cloisters; then led the way to the choir, and reminded them that prayer was the only weapon to be employed by ministers of religion: whereupon all fell on their knees before the consecrated wafer, and intoned the chant—'Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine' (O Lord, save thy people). Some had rested their weapons against the wall, others still grasped them, and only a few remained on guard at the main entrances.

It was now about the twenty-second hour (*i. e.*, two hours before sundown); the throng on the Piazza had increased, the assailants were encouraged by meeting with no resistance, and the Signory's guards were coming to their aid. At this moment the mace-bearers appeared, to proclaim the Signory's decree that all in the convent were to lay down their arms; and that Savonarola was sentenced to exile, and ordered to quit the Florentine territory within twelve hours' time. Most of those who heard this announcement regarded it as a device of the enemy. It was difficult to credit that the Signory could order the attacked, who were making scarcely any defense, to lay down their arms, while the assailants, who were the sole authors of the disturbance, and in far greater numbers, were not only left unmolested, but supplied with reinforcements! Nevertheless, the proclamation decided several to obtain safe-conducts and hurry away. . . .

Meanwhile night was falling, and the siege of the convent was being carried on with desperate ferocity. Some fired the gates; while others had successfully scaled the walls on the Sapienza side, and made their way into the cloisters. After sacking the infirmary and the cells, they all penetrated to the sacristy, sword in hand, and broke open the door leading to the choir. When the friars, who were kneeling there in prayer, found themselves thus suddenly attacked, they were naturally stirred to self-defense. Seizing the burning torches, and crucifixes of metal and wood, they belabored their assailants with so much energy that the latter fled in dismay, believing for a moment that a band of angels had come to the defense of the convent.

Then the other monks, who had laid down their arms at Savonarola's behest, again resumed the defense; and there was more skirmishing in the cloisters and corridors. At the same time the great bell of the convent, called the Piagnona, tolled forth the alarm; both besiegers and besieged fought with greater fury; all was clamor and confusion, cries of despair, and clashing of steel. This was the moment when Baldo Inghirlami and Francesco Davanzati dealt such vigorous blows, and that Fra Luca d'Andrea della Robbia chased the foes through the cloisters, sword in hand. Fra Benedetto and a few others mounted on the roof, and repeatedly drove back the enemy with a furious hail of stones and tiles. Several of the monks fired their muskets with good effect inside the church; and a certain Fra Enrico, a young, fair-haired, handsome German, particularly distinguished himself by his prowess. At the first beginning of the struggle he had courageously sallied out into the midst of the mob, and possessed himself of the weapon he wielded so valiantly; accompanying each stroke with the cry, 'Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine.'

At this juncture the victory was decidedly with St. Mark's, and its defenders were exulting in their success; when a fresh edict of the Signory was proclaimed, declaring all rebels who did not forsake the convent within an hour. Thereupon several more demanded safe-conducts and departed, thus further diminishing the too scanty garrison. And there being no longer any doubt as to the Signory's intention of crushing St. Mark's, even the remnant of the defenders lost hope and courage, and were already beginning to give way. Savonarola and many of his brethren still remained in the choir, offering up prayers, which were interrupted from time to time by the cries of the injured or the piteous wail of the dying. Among the latter was a youth of the Panciatichi House, who was borne, fatally wounded, to the steps of the high altar; and there, amid volleys of harquebuss shots, received the communion from Fra Domenico, and joyfully drew his last breath in the friar's arms, after kissing the crucifix and exclaiming, "Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!" (Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!)

Night had now come; and the monks, exhausted with hunger and agitation, devoured some dry figs one of their companions had brought. Suddenly the defense was resumed; louder cries were heard, and fresh volleys of shot. In the pulpit from which Savonarola had so frequently inculcated the doctrine of peace, Fra Enrico, the German, had now taken his stand, and was firing his harquebuss with fatal effect. The smoke became so dense that it was necessary to break the windows in order to escape suffocation; and thereupon long tongues of flame poured into the church from the burning doors. The German and another defender retreated into the choir, and clambering upon the high altar, planted their harquebusses beside the great crucifix, and continued their fire.

Savonarola was overwhelmed with grief by this waste of life in his cause, but was powerless to prevent it. No attention being paid to his protests, he again raised the Host, and commanded his friars to follow him. Traversing the dormitory, he had conducted nearly all to the Greek library, when he caught sight of Fra Benedetto rushing down-stairs, maddened with fury and fully armed, to confront the assailants at close quarters. Laying his hand on his disciple's shoulder, he gave him a severe glance, and said in a tone of earnest reproof, "Fra Benedetto, throw down those weapons and take up the cross: I never intended my brethren to shed blood." And the monk humbled himself at his master's feet, laid aside his arms, and followed him to the library with the rest.

A final and still more threatening decree was now issued by the Signory, against all who continued to resist; commanding Savonarola, Fra Domenico, and Fra Silvestro to present themselves at the palace without delay, and giving their word that no harm should be offered them. Fra Domenico insisted on seeing the order in writing; and the heralds, not having it with them, went back to fetch it. Meanwhile Savonarola had deposited the sacrament in the hall of the library beneath the noble arches of Michelozzi's vault; and collecting the friars around him, addressed them for the last time in these memorable words: «My beloved children, in the presence of God, in the presence of the consecrated wafer, with our enemies already in the convent, I confirm the truth of my doctrines. All that I have said hath come to me from God, and he is my witness in heaven that I speak no lie. I had not foreseen that all the city would so quickly turn against me; nevertheless, may the Lord's will be done. My last exhortation to ye is this: let faith, prayer, and patience be your weapons. I leave ye with anguish and grief, to give myself into my enemies' hands. I know not whether they will take my life; but certain am I that, once dead, I shall be able to succor ye in heaven far better than it hath been granted me to help ye on earth. Take comfort, embrace the cross, and by it shall ye find the way of salvation.»

The invaders were now masters of almost the whole of the convent; and Gioacchino della Vecchia, captain of the palace guard, threatened to knock down the walls with his guns unless the orders of the Signory were obeyed. Fra Malatesta Sacramoro, the very man who a few days before had offered to walk through the fire, now played the part of Judas. He treated with the Compagnacci, and persuaded them to present a written order, for which they sent an urgent request to the Signory; while Savonarola again confessed to Fra Domenico, and took the sacrament from his hands, in preparation for their common surrender. As for their companion, Fra Silvestro, he had hidden himself; and in the confusion was nowhere to be found.

Just then a singular incident occurred. One of Savonarola's disciples — a certain Girolamo Gini, who had long yearned to assume the Dominican robe — had come to vespers that day, and from the beginning of the riot energetically helped in the defense of the convent. When Savonarola ordered all to lay down their arms, this worthy artisan instantly obeyed; but nevertheless could not refrain from rushing through the cloisters and showing himself to the assailants,— in his desire, as he confessed at his examination, to face death for the love of Jesus Christ. Having been wounded, he now appeared in the Greek library, with blood streaming from his head; and kneeling at his master's feet, humbly prayed to be invested with the habit. And his request was granted on the spot.

Savonarola was urged by some of his friends to consent to be lowered from the walls and seek safety in flight; since, if he once set foot in the palace, there was little chance of his ever leaving it alive. He hesitated, and seemed on the point of adopting this sole means of escape; when Fra Malatesta turned on him and said, "Should not the shepherd lay down his life for his lambs?" These words appeared to touch him deeply; and he accordingly made no reply, but after kissing his brethren and folding them to his heart,—this very Malatesta first of all,—he deliberately gave himself up, together with his trusty and inseparable Fra Domenico, into the hands of the mace-bearers, who had returned from the Signory at that instant.

Translation of Linda Villari.

HERSART DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ

THE HEROIC AND LEGENDARY LITERATURE OF BRITTANY

BY WILLIAM SHARP

If one were asked what were the three immediate influences, the open-sesames of literature, which revealed alike to the dreaming and the critical mind of modern Europe the beauty and extraordinary achievement of the Celtic genius, it would not be difficult to name them. From Scotland came Macpherson's reweaving of ancient Gaelic legendary lore under the collective title of 'Ossian'; from Wales came the 'Mabinogion,' obtained and translated by Lady Charlotte Guest; and from Brittany came the now celebrated life work of the Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué, the 'Barzaz-Breiz,' or collection of the popular songs and heroic ballads of old Brittany,—some mediæval, some with their roots in the heart of ancient Armorica.

The history of the influence of these three books—'Ossian,' the 'Mabinogion,' and the 'Barzaz Breiz'—has never yet been properly estimated. When a competent critic shall give us this history, in its exact and critical relation to literature itself, the deep and far-reaching power of what may be distinguished as fundamentally appealing books will be made apparent.

If these were the immediate influences in the awakening of the mind of Europe to the beauty and mystery and high significance of the old Celtic literature, legendary lore, and racial traditions, the general attention was attracted rather by two famous pioneers of critical thought. In France, Ernest Renan, himself of Celtic blood and genius, and having indeed in his name one of the most ancient and sacred of Armorican designations (Ronan), gained the notice of all intellectual Europe by his acute, poignantly sympathetic, and eloquent treatise on the 'Poetry of the Celtic Races.' Later, in England, Matthew Arnold convinced his reluctant fellow-countrymen that a new and wide domain of literary beauty lay as it were just beyond their home pastures.

Since Renan and Matthew Arnold, there have been many keen and ever more and more thoroughly equipped students of Celtic literature; but while admitting the immense value of the philological labors of men such as the German Windisch, the English Whitley Stokes, the French Loth, the Scottish Dr. Cameron, the Welsh Professor Rhys, and the Irish Standish Hayes O'Grady, or of the more popular writings of collectors and exponents such as the late Campbell of Islay, Mr. Alfred Nutt, Mr. Standish O'Grady, and others, it would be at once unjust and uncritical to omit full recognition of the labors of collectors and interpreters such as, say, Mr. Alexander Carmichael in Scotland, and Hersart de la Villemarqué in France.

There can hardly be a student of Celtic literature who is unfamiliar with the ‹Barzaz-Breiz,› that unique collection of Breton legendary lore and heroic ballads so closely linked with the name of Hersart de la Villemarqué. This celebrated man — at once collector, folk-lorist, philologist, poet, and impassioned patriot — was not only born a Breton of the Bretons, but began life among circumstances pre-eminently conducive to his mental development along the lines where he has made his name of world-wide repute. His great work* was not only the outcome of his own genius and of his racial inheritance, but was inspired by his mother, a remarkable woman of a very ancient Armorican family. It is to her that the ‹Barzaz-Breiz› was dedicated: «À ma tendre et sainte mère, Marie-Ursule Feydeau du Plessix-Nizon, Comtesse de la Villemarqué.» So significant are the opening words of his introduction to the new and definitive edition (1893) that they may be given here: —

> «A profound sentiment,» he says in effect, «inspired the idea of this book wherein my country stands forth self-portrayed, and in that revelation wins our love. In sending forth this revised reprint of my work, doubtless for the last time, and feeling myself to be as much as in my early days under the spell of her love, I dedicate this work to her who really began it, and that too before I was born, — to her who enthralled my childhood with old-world ballads and legendary tales, and who herself was indeed for me one of those good fairies who, as the old lore has it, stand by the side of happy cradles. My mother, who was also the mother of all who were unhappy, once restored to health a poor wandering singer of the parish of Melgren. Moved by the sincere regrets of the poor woman at her inability to convey aright her gratitude to her benefactress, having indeed nothing in the world to offer but her songs, my mother asked her to repeat one or two of her treasury of folk-songs. So impressed was she by the original character of the Breton poetry, that often thereafter she sought and obtained a like pleasure. At a later date,

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* «‹Barzaz-Breiz. Chants Populaires de la Bretagne, recueillis, traduits, et annotés par le Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué, M. I.› (work crowned by the Academy of France). Among the same author's other published writings in book form (he has written extensively in the Revue Celtique and elsewhere) are — ‹Merlin: Son Histoire, Ses Œuvres, Son Influence,› and ‹La Légende Celtique. et la Poésie des Cloîtres en Islande, en Cambrie, et en Bretagne.»

though this was not for herself, she made a special quest of this ancestral country-side fugitive poetry. Such was the real origin—in a sense purely domestic and private, and primarily the outcome of a sweet and pious nature—of this collection of the 'Barzaz-Breiz'; some of the finest pieces in which I found written, in the first years of the century, on the blank leaves of an old manuscript volume of recipes wherein my mother had her store of medical science.»

As for what M. de la Villemarqué himself did to qualify for his lifelong labor of love, he writes as follows:—

«To render this collection at once more complete and worthy of the attention of literary critics, and of all students of literature and life, scrupulous and conscientious care has been taken. I have gone hither and thither on my quest through long years, and traversed every region of Basse-Bretagne [Lower or Northern Brittany], the richest in old memories; taking part in popular festivals and in private gatherings, at our national *pardons* [pilgrimages], at the great fairs, at weddings, or the special fête-days of the agricultural world and of the workers in all the national industries; ever by preference seeking the professional beggars, the itinerant shoemakers, tailors, weavers, and vagrant journeymen of all kinds,—in a word, in the whole nomad song-loving, story-telling fraternity. Everywhere, too, I have interrogated the old women, nurses, young girls, and old men; above all, those of the hill regions, who in the last century formed part of the armed bands of patriots, and whose recollections, when once they can be quickened, constitute a national repertory as rich as any one could possibly consult. Even children at their play have sometimes revealed to me unexpected old-world survivals. Ever varying as was the degree of intelligence in all these people, they were at one in this: that no one among them knew how to read. Naturally, therefore, the songs and legends and superstitions which I heard thus are not to be found in books, and never at least as here given; for these came fresh from the lips of an illiterate but passionately conservative, patriotic, and poetic people.»

In a word, Brittany is, in common with Ireland or Gaelic Scotland, the last home of the old-world Celt, of the old Celtic legendary and mythological lore, of the passing and ever more and more fugitive Celtic folk literature. Scotland has her Campbell of Islay, her Alexander Carmichael; Brittany has Hersart de la Villemarqué.

The scientific value of M. de la Villemarqué's 'Barzaz-Breiz' has been disparaged by some writers, to whom the pedantry of absolute literality is more dear than the living spirit of which language is but the veil; and this on the ground that his versions are often too elaborated, and are sometimes modern rather than archaic. The best answer is in the words of the famous Breton himself, in the preface to the revised and definitive edition. After detailing the endless care taken, and the comparative method pursued, he adds: «The sole license I have permitted myself is the substitution, in place of certain mutilated or vicious expressions, or of certain unpoetic or less poetic verses, of corresponding but more adequate and harmonious verses, or words from some other version or versions. This was the method of Walter Scott [in his ‹Scottish Minstrelsy›], and I could not follow a better guide.»

The ‹Barzaz-Breiz,› or Treasury of Breton Popular Chants, is a storehouse of learned and most interesting and fascinating matter concerning the origins and survival and inter-relations of the racial and other legendary beliefs, and superstitions, and folk-lore generally, of the Armorican people — Arvor, or Armorica, being the old name of Brittany, the Wales of France. In the introductory and appendical notes to each heroic ballad or legendary poem, Hersart de la Villemarqué has condensed the critical and specialistic knowledge of one of the most indefatigable and enthusiastic of folk-lorists; and this with the keenness of sympathy and of insight, and the new and convincing charm of interpretation, of a man of genius.

It is amazing how little of his work has been translated or paraphrased in English, especially when we consider the ever-growing interest in literature of the kind, and particularly in Celtic literature. It is pleasant, however, to know that an English ‹Barzaz-Breiz› is promised us before long, and that from the pen of an author who has a pre-eminent right to the task,— Mrs. Wingate Rinder; whose volume entitled ‹The Shadow of Arvor› (a re-telling of old Breton tales and romances) is the most interesting and beautiful work of its kind we have, and is, I may add, a book that won the high approbation of M. de la Villemarqué himself. *

The three representative pieces which I have translated from the ‹Barzaz-Breiz› are not only typical of the ancient and the mediæval Breton romance or heroic ballad, but are given intact with their prefatory and appendical notes.

‹The Wine of the Gauls› is one of the earliest preserved utterances of the ancient Armorican bards. ‹The Tribute of Noménoë› is still old, though not so ancient. ‹The Foster-Brother› is a type of both the style and substance of the mediæval folk-tale.

[NOTE.— The three following citations from Villemarqué, were translated, and the notes accompanying them prepared, by William Sharp of London, for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.› Mr. Sharp's article on Breton Literature completes the survey of the literature of the Celtic races embraced in the articles on Celtic Literature (Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and Cornish) by William Sharp and Ernest Rhys; Ossian, by the same authors; and on Campion, Sir Thomas Malory, and The Mabinogion, by Ernest Rhys.]

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* Two of the legendary romances, which appear after this article in their crude original form, have been beautifully retold by Mrs. Wingate Rinder in ‹The Shadow of Arvor›: ‹Gwennolaik› and ‹The Tribute of Noménoë.›

THE WINE OF THE GAULS AND THE DANCE OF THE SWORD—DIALECT OF LÉON

ARGUMENT

ONE is not ignorant that in the sixth century the Bretons often made excursions into the territory of their neighbors, subject to the domination of the Franks, whom they called by the general name of Gauls. These expeditions, undertaken oftenest under the necessity of defending their independence, were also sometimes ventured through the desire of providing themselves in the enemy's country with what they lacked in Brittany, principally with wine. As soon as autumn came, says Gregory of Tours, they departed, followed by chariots, and supplied with instruments of war and of agriculture; armed for the vintage. Were the grapes still hanging, they plucked them themselves; was the wine made, they carried it away. If they were too hurried, or surprised by the Franks, they drank it on the spot; then leading the vintagers captive, they joyously regained their woods and their marshes. The piece here following was composed, according to the illustrious author of the 'Merovingian Accounts,' on the return from one of these expeditions. Some tavern habitués of the parish of Coray intone it glass in hand, more for the melody than for the words; the primitive spirit of which, thanks be to God, they have ceased to seize.

I

BETTER is white wine of grapes than of mulberries; better is white grape wine.

—O fire! O fire! O steel! O steel! O fire! O fire! O steel and fire! O oak! O oak! O earth! O waves! O waves! O earth! O earth and oak!—

Red blood and white wine, a river! red blood and white wine!

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Better new wine than ale; better new wine.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Better sparkling wine than hydromel; better sparkling wine.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Better wine of the Gauls than of apples; better wine of the Gauls.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Gaul, vines and leaf for thee, O dunghill! Gaul, vine and leaf to thee!

—O fire! O fire! etc.

White wine to thee, hearty Breton! White wine to thee, Breton!

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Wine and blood flow mixed; wine and blood flow.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

White wine and red blood, and thick blood; white wine and red blood.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

'Tis blood of the Gauls that flows; the blood of the Gauls.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

In the rough fray have I drunk wine and blood; I have drunk wine and blood.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Wine and blood nourish him who drinks; wine and blood nourish.

-O fire! O fire! etc.

II

Blood and wine and dance, Sun, to thee! blood and wine and dance.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

And dance and song, song and battle! and dance and song.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Dance of the sword in rounds; dance of the sword.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Song of the blue sword which murder loves; song of the blue sword.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

Battle where the savage sword is king; battle of the savage sword.

—O fire! O fire! etc.

O sword! O great king of the battle-field! O sword! O great king!

—O fire! O fire! etc.

May the rainbow shine on thy forehead! may the rainbow shine!

—O fire! O fire! O steel! O steel! O fire! O fire! O
steel and fire! O oak! O oak! O earth! O earth!
O waves! O waves! O earth! O earth and oak!

NOTE

It is probable that the expedition to which this wild song alludes took place on the territory of the Nantais; for their wine is white, as is that of which the bard speaks. The different beverages he attributes to the Bretons—mulberry wine, beer, hydromel, apple wine or cider—are also those which were used in the sixth century.

Without any doubt we have here two distinct songs, welded together by the power of time. The second begins at the thirteenth stanza, and is a warrior's hymn in honor of the sun, a fragment of the Sword Round of the ancient Bretons. Like the Gaels and the Germans, they were in the habit of surrendering themselves to it during their festivals; it was executed by young men who knew the art of jumping circularly to music, at the same time throwing their swords into the air and catching them again. This is represented on three Celtic medallions in M. Hucher's collection: on one a warrior jumps up and down, while brandishing his battle-axe in one hand, and with the other throwing it up behind his long floating head-dress; on a second one, a warrior dances before a suspended sword, and, says M. Henri Martin, he is evidently repeating the invocation:—

«O sword, O great chief of the battle-field! O sword, O great king!»

This, it is obvious, would cast us back into plain paganism. At least it is certain that the language of the last seven stanzas is still older than that of the other twelve. As for its form, the entire piece is regularly alliterated from one end to the other, like the songs of the primitive bards; and like them, is subject to the law of ternary rhythm. I have no need to draw notice to what a clashing of meeting weapons it recalls to the ear, and what a strident blast the melody breathes.

THE TRIBUTE OF NOMÉNOË—CORNOUAILLE DIALECT

Argument

Noménoë, the greatest king whom Brittany has had, pursued the work of his country's deliverance, but by means different from his predecessors'. He opposed ruse to force; he feigned to submit to the foreign domination, and by these tactics succeeded in impeding an enemy ten times superior in numbers. The emperor Charles, called the Bald, was deceived by his demonstrations of obedience. He did not guess that the Breton chief, like all politicians of superior genius, knew how to wait. When the moment for acting came, Noménoë threw off the mask: he drove the Franks beyond the rivers of the Oust and of Vilaine, extending the frontiers of Brittany to Poitou; and taking the towns of Nantes and Rennes from the enemy, which since then have not ceased to make part of the Breton territory, he delivered his compatriots from the tribute which they paid the Franks (841).

"A remarkably beautiful piece of poetry," says Augustin Thierry, "and one full of details of the habits of a very ancient epoch, recounts the event which determined this grand act of independence." According to the illustrious French historian, "it is an energetically symbolic picture of the prolonged inaction of the patriot prince, and of his rude awakening when he judged the moment had come." ('Ten Years of Historical Studies,' 6th ed., page 515.)

I

The golden grass is mown; it has misted suddenly.

—To battle!—

It mists,—said, from the summit of the mountain of Arez, the great chief of the family:

—To battle!—

From the direction of the country of the Franks, for three weeks more and more, more and more, has it misted,
So that in no wise can I see my son return to me.
Good merchant, who the country travels o'er, know'st thou news of Karo, my son?—
Mayhap, old father of Arez; but how looks he? what does he?—
He is a man of sense and of heart; he it was who went to drive the chariots to Rennes,
To drive to Rennes the chariots drawn by horses harnessed three by three,
Divided between them, they that carry faithfully Brittany's tribute.—
If your son is the tribute-bearer, in vain will you await him.
When they came to weigh the silver, there lacked three pounds in every hundred;
And the steward said: Thy head, vassal, shall complete the weight.
And drawing his sword, he cut off the head of your son.
Then by the hair he took it, and threw it on the scales.—

At these words the old chief of the family was like to swoon:
Violently on the rock he fell, hiding his face with his white hairs;
And his head in his hands, he cried with a moan:—Karo, my son, my poor, dear son!

II

Followed by his kindred, the great tribal chief set out;
The great tribal chief of the family approaches, he approaches the stronghold of Noménoë.—
Tell me, head of the porters,—the master, is he at home?
Be he there, or not there, God keep him in good health!—
As these words he said, the lord to his dwelling returned;
Returning from the hunt, preceded by his great playful dogs,
In his hand he held his bow, on his shoulder carried a boar,
And the fresh blood, quite warm from the mouth of the beast, flowed upon his white hand.
Good day, good day to you, honest mountaineers! first of all to you, great tribal chief:
What news is there, what wish you of me?—
We come to know of you if a law there be; if in the sky there is a God, and in Brittany a chief.—
In the sky there is a God, I believe, and in Brittany a chief if I can.—
He who will, he can; he who can, drives the Frank away—
Drives away the Frank, defends his country, avenges it and will avenge it.
He will avenge the living and dead, and me and Karo my child,
My poor son Karo, beheaded by the excommunicated Frank;
Beheaded in his prime, and whose head, golden as millet, was thrown into the scales to balance the weight!—
And the old man began to weep, and his tears flowed down his gray beard,
And they shone as the dew on a lily, at the rising of the sun.
When the lord saw this, a bloody and terrible oath he swore:—
By this boar's head and the arrow which pierced it, I swear it:
Before I wash the blood from my right hand, I shall have washed my country's wound!

III

Noménoë has done that which no chief e'er did before:
He went to the shores of the sea with bags to gather pebbles,
Pebbles to tender as tribute to the steward of the bald king.*
Noménoë has done that which chief ne'er did before:
With polished silver has he shod his horses, and with reversèd shoes.

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* The Emperor Charles, surnamed the Bald.

Noménoë has done that which chief ne'er did before:
Prince as he is, in person to pay the tribute he has gone.—
Open wide the gates of Rennes, that I make entry in the town:
With chariots full of silver, 'tis Noménoë who is here.—
Alight, my lord; enter the castle; and leave your chariots in the coach-house;
Leave to the equerry your white horse, and come and sup above.
Come to sup, and first of all to wash: there sounds the water-horn; do you hear?*—
I will wash in a moment, my lord, when the tribute shall have been weighed.—
The first bag to be carried (and it was well tied),
The first bag which was brought, of the right weight was found.
The second bag which was brought, also of right weight was found.
The third bag that they weighed:—Aha! aha! this weight is not right!—
When the steward this saw, unto the bag his hand he extended;
Quickly he seized the cords, endeavoring to untie them.—
Wait, wait, Sir Steward, with my sword I will cut them.—
Hardly had he finished these words, that his sword leaped from the scabbard,
That close to the shoulders the head of the Frank bent double it struck,
And that it cut flesh and nerves and one chain of the scale beside.
The head fell in the scale, and thus the balance was made.
But behold the town in uproar:—Stop, stop the assassin!
He escapes, he escapes! bring torches! let us run quickly after him.—
Bring torches! 'twould be well: the night is black, and frozen the road;
But I greatly fear you will wear out your shoes in following me,
Your shoes of blue gilded leather: as to your scales, you will use them no more;
You will use no more your golden scales in weighing the stones of the Bretons.

—To battle!—

NOTE

This traditional portrait of the chief whose political genius saved Breton independence is no less faithful, from its point of view, than those of history itself. Thus, Augustin Thierry did not hesitate to place it in the gallery which contemporaneous history has preserved to us, and which he has so admirably restored. The latter proves by its general spirit, if by no precise feature, the exactitude of the anecdote. Before the time of Noménoë, for at least ten years, the Bretons had paid tribute to the Franks; he delivered them from it: that is the real fact. The tone of the ballad is in harmony with the epoch.

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* Before the repast, at the sound of the horn, one washed one's hands.

As the head of the Frank charged to receive the tribute falls in the scales, where the weight is lacking, and the poet cries with ferocious joy, «His head fell in the scale, and thus the balance was made!» one remembers that a few years ago, Morvan, the Lez-Breiz of the Breton tradition, said, trembling with rage, «If I could see him, he would have of me what he asks, this king of the Franks: I would pay him the tribute in iron.»

In regard to the epic song with which the liberator of Brittany inspired the national Muse, the satirical song composed in the Abbey of St. Florent against Noménoë is opposed. The Frankish monks of the shores of the Loire could not pardon him the destruction of their monastery; and to avenge themselves, they invented the following fable which they chanted in chorus:—

«In that time lived a certain man called Noménoë:
Of poor parents he was born; his field he plowed himself;
But hidden in the earth an immense treasure he encountered;
By means of which among the rich many friends for himself he made;
Then, clever in the art to deceive, he began himself to raise;
So that, thanks to his riches, he finished by dominating all,» etc.

Quidam fuit hoc tempore
Nomenoius nomine;

Pauper fuit progenie;
Agrum colebat vomere;

Sed reperit largissimum
Thesaurum terra conditum;

Quo plurimorum divitum
Junxit sibi solatium.

Dehinc, per artem fallere,
Cœpit qui mox succrescere,

Donec super cunctos, ope
Transcenderet potentiæ, etc.

Poor Latin, poor rhymes, poor revenge.

THE FOSTER-BROTHER—TRÉGUIER DIALECT

ARGUMENT

THIS ballad, some variants of which I owe to the Abbé Henry, and which is one of the most popular of Brittany. is sung under different titles in several parts of Europe. Fauriel has published it in modern Greek; Bürger picked it up from the lips of a young German peasant girl, and gave it an artificial form; 'The Dead Go About Alive' is but an artistic reproduction of the Danish ballad 'Aagé and Elsé.' A Welsh savant has assured me that his compatriots of the mountains possess it in their language. All are based on the idea of a duty, the obedience to the sacredness of the oath. The hero of the primitive German ballad, like the Greek Constantine, like the Breton cavalier, vowed to return, though dead; and he keeps his word.

We do not know to what epoch the composition of the two German and Danish songs, nor that of the Greek ballad, date back: ours must belong to the most flourishing period of the Middle Ages, chivalric devotion shining therein by its sweetest lustre.

I

THE prettiest girl of high degree in all this country round was a young maid of eighteen years, whose name was Gwennolaïk.

Dead was the old lord, her two poor sisters and her mother; her own people all were dead, alas! except her stepmother.

It was pitiful to see her, weeping bitterly on the threshold of the manor-door, so beauteous and so sweet!

Her eyes fixed on the sea, seeking there the vessel of her foster-brother, her only consolation in the world, and whom since long she had awaited;

Her eyes fixed upon the sea, and seeking there the vessel of her foster-brother. Six years had passed since he had left his country.—

Away from here, my daughter, and go and fetch the cattle; I do not feed you to remain there seated.—

She awaked her two, three hours before the day in winter, to light the fire and sweep the house;

To go to draw water at the fountain of the dwarfs, with a little cracked pitcher and a broken pail:

The night was dark; the water had been disturbed by the foot of the horse of a cavalier who returned from Nantes.—

Good health to you, young maid: are you betrothed?—

And I (what a child and fool I was!)—I replied: I wot naught of it.—

Are you betrothed? Tell me, I pray you.—

Save your grace, dear sir: not yet am I betrothed.—

Well, take my golden ring, and say to your stepmother that unto a cavalier who returns from Nantes you are betrothed:
That a great combat there has been; that his young esquire has been killed over there, that he himself by a sword-thrust in the flank has been wounded;
That in three weeks and three days he'll be restored, and to the manor will come gayly and quickly to seek you.—
And she to run at once to the house and to look at the ring: it was the ring that her foster-brother wore on his left hand.

II

One, two, three weeks had passed, and the young cavalier had not yet returned.—
You must be married; I have thought thereon in my heart, and for you a proper man, my daughter, I've found.—
Save your grace, stepmother, I wish no husband other than my foster-brother, who has come.
He gave me my wedding-ring of gold, and soon will come gayly and quickly to seek me.—
Be quiet, if you please, with your wedding-ring of gold, or I will take a rod to teach you how to speak.
Willy nilly, you shall wed Job the Lunatic, our young stable-boy.—
Wed Job! oh horror! I shall die of sorrow! My mother, my poor little mother! if thou wert still alive!—
Go and lament in the court, mourn there as much as you will; in vain will you make a wry face: in three days betrothed you'll be.

III

About that time the old grave-digger traveled through the country, his bell in his hand, to carry the tidings of death.
Pray for the soul which hath been the lord cavalier, in his lifetime a good man and a brave.
And who beyond Nantes was wounded to death by a sword-thrust in his side, in a great battle over there.
To-morrow at the setting of the sun the watching will begin, and thereafter from the white church to the tomb they will carry him.

IV

How early you do go away!—Whether I am going? Oh, yes indeed! —But the feast is not yet done, nor is the evening spent.—
I cannot restrain the pity she inspires in me, and the horror which awakes this herdsman who stands in the house face to face with her!

Around the poor girl, who bitterly wept, every one was weeping, the rector himself:
In the parish church this morn all were weeping, all, both young and old; all except the stepmother.
The more the fiddlers in returning to the manor twanged their bows, the more they consoled her, the more was her heart torn.
They took her to the table, to the place of honor for supper; she has drunk no drop of water, nor eaten a morsel of bread.
They tried just now to undress her, to put her in her bed: she has thrown away her ring, has torn her wedding fillet;
She has escaped from the house, her hair in disorder. Where she has gone to hide, no one doth it know.

V

All lights were extinguished; in the manor every one profoundly slept; elsewhere, the poor young maid was awake, to fever a prey.—
Who is there?—I, Nola, thy foster-brother.—
It is thou, really, really thou! It is thou, thou, my dear brother!—
And she to go out, and to flee away on her brother's white horse in saddle behind, encircling him with her little arm, seated behind him.—
How fast we go, my brother! We have gone a hundred leagues, I think! How happy I am near unto thee! So much was I never before.
Is it still afar, thy mother's house? I would we were arrived.—
Ever hold me close, my sister: ere long we shall be there.—
The owl fled screeching before them; as well as the wild animals frightened by the noise they made.—
How supple is thy horse, and thy armor how bright! I find thee much grown, my brother.
I find thee very beautiful! Is it still far, thy manor?—
Ever hold me close, my sister: we shall arrive apace.—
Thy heart is icy; thy hair is wet; thy heart and thy hand are icy: I fear that thou art cold.—
Ever hold me close, my sister: behold us quite near; hearest thou not the piercing sounds of the gay musicians of our nuptials?—
He had not finished speaking when his horse stopped all at once, shivering and neighing very loud;
And they found themselves on an island where many people were dancing;
Where young men and beautiful young girls, holding each other by the hand, did play:
All about green trees with apples laden, and behind, the sun rising on the mountains.

A little clear fountain flowed there; souls to life returning, were drinking there;
Gwennola's mother was with them, and her two sisters also.
There was nothing there but pleasure, songs, and cries of joy.

VI

On the morrow morning, at the rising of the sun, young girls carried the spotless body of little Gwennola from the white church to the tomb.

NOTES

As WILL be remembered, the German ballad ends, after the fashion of the stories of the 'Helden-Buch,' by a catastrophe which swallows up the two heroes; it is the same with the Greek ballad published by Fauriel.

The ancient Bretons recognized several stages of existence through which the soul passed; and Procopius placed the Druid elysium beyond the ocean in one of the Britannic Isles, which he does not name. The Welsh traditions are more precise: they expressly designate this island under the name of Isle of Avalon, or of the Apples. It is the abiding-place of the heroes: Arthur, mortally wounded at the battle of Camlann, is conducted there by the bards Merlin and Taliesin, guided by Barinte the peerless boatman ('Vita Merlini Caledoniensis'). The French author of the novel of 'William of the Short Nose' has his hero Renoard transported thither by the fairies, with the Breton heroes.

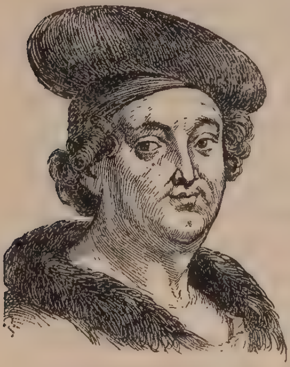
One of the Armorican lays of Mary of France also transports thither the squireen Lanval. It is also there, one cannot doubt it, that the foster-brother and his betrothed alight: but no soul, it was said, could be admitted there before having received the funeral rites; it remained wandering on the opposite bank until the moment when the priest collected its bones and sang its funeral hymn. This opinion is as alive to-day in Lower Brittany as in the Middle Ages; and we have seen celebrated there the same funeral ceremonies as those of olden times.

William Sharp

FRANÇOIS VILLON

(1431–146–?)

When Wordsworth wrote in 'The Leech-Gatherer' of «mighty poets in their misery dead,» he was thinking more of Marlowe and Burns and Chatterton than of Villon, if indeed the name ever caught his attention in his visits to the French capital. The French themselves at that time attached little importance to it; and were far from suspecting that the title «Father of French Poetry» would ever be taken from the courtly Ronsard — himself hardly yet seen in his true significance — and bestowed upon François Villon, «Student, Poet, and Housebreaker,» as Mr. Stevenson candidly calls him.


FRANÇOIS VILLON

Now, even London has its Villon Society, which in 1874 printed the first edition of Mr. John Payne's English version of Villon's poems. The revised and definitive edition, with its fascinating introduction, biographically and critically exhaustive, appeared in 1892, — the same year that saw the publication of M. Longnon's complete edition based on the earliest known texts and various manuscripts. Happily the English translation did not follow this edition too soon to be brought into accordance with it wherever it was not in error: Payne profited by the labors of scholars who began their researches before and after the significant spark struck in 1887 by M. Gaston Paris in his brief article, 'Une Question Biographique sur Villon.' This article — by one who, according to M. Longnon, knows and appreciates Villon's verse better than any one else — led to the discovery of several documents in the national archives, consisting mainly of judicial processes against Villon and his boon companions. It remained for M. Marcel Schwob to bring to light the picturesque document of the *Pet-au-déable* (Devil's Stone), on which the poet founded a romance he seems never to have published, though it figures among the bequests of his 'Greater Testament':—

«I do bequeath my library:
  The 'Devil's Crake' Romaunt, whilere

By Messire Guy de Tabarie—
  A right trustworthy man—writ fair.
  Beneath a bench it lies somewhere,
In quires. Though crudely it be writ,
  The matter's so beyond compare
  That it redeems the style of it.»

(. . . . . ma librairie,
Et le Rommant du Pet au Déable,
Lequel Maistre Guy Tabarie
Grossa, qui est homs veritable.
Par cayers est soubz une table.
Combien qu'il soit rudement fait,
La matiere est si tres notable,
Qu'elle amende tout le mesfait.)

It is interesting to note the likeness to English in the nebulous French of a people whose national existence had not yet become wholly uncontested. So *librairie* means the poet's own books—not the place where he bought them; and in more than one passage he calls himself *le poure* (not *le pauvre*) *Villon.*

The Pet-au-déable was a huge monolith attached to a tavern on the right bank of the Seine, and serving partly as a boundary-stone, to mark the limits of the property. A gang of students belonging to the university, who had been going from bad to worse, had been further demoralized in 1453 by contentions between the city authorities and the rector of the Sorbonne,—the latter going so far as to close the university for a period of six months in the middle of the term. Not content with stealing the meat-hooks from the market of Saint Geneviève,—a prank the butchers, when questioned, were disposed to forgive, declaring that they and the students were *very well together;* not content with stealing twenty-five hens from the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Près, nor even with robbing a passing wagon of its cargo of choice wine,—the ring contrived with much mock ceremony to remove the formidable Devil's Stone, tugging it over the river, and setting it up on the hillside behind the Place Maubert; whence to this day the worst riots of the Latin Quarter take their rise. In vain did the authorities transport the stone to the Palais Royal: the students recaptured and returned it to the chosen site. Another great stone with which the mistress of the hotel had supplied the place of the Pet-au-déable was likewise wrenched away and set up on the hillside. That done, passers-by—above all, the king's officers—were compelled to take an oath to respect the privileges of the Pet-au-déable and its companion: the latter wore every Sunday a fresh garland of rosemary; and on moonlight nights a merry band, with the love-locks and short cloaks that have never ceased to be characteristic of the *pays latin*, danced around the object of their whimsical devotion. A few steps from the sinister spot, where continued orgies gave rise to repeated brawlings, on a strip of turf hard by Houdon's statue of Voltaire, stands the childish figure of François Montcorbier, *alias* François Villon, *alias* François des Loges, *alias* Michel Mouton, who was twenty years old when the theft he endeavored to celebrate «in double quires»—and in which he evidently took a lively interest, if not a leading part—was perpetrated.

Just who Villon's parents were, and just where he was born,—despite the persistency with which he called himself Parisian,—is so uncertain that his own suggestion,—

«Comme extraict que ie suis de fée,»

which Mr. Payne translates—

«As sure as I'm a fairy's son,»—

is perhaps as satisfactory as any conclusion that can be reached. The dare-deviltry of the defiant little sculptured figure, its jaunty cloak and steeple-crowned hat and feather, its look of the goblin page with a dash of sweetness, suggesting the classic faun, carry out the uncanny impression. These neighboring statues bear a certain relation to each other. Some one said of Voltaire, who was called the «spoiled child,» «It was not Christianity that he attacked.» Voltaire denounced celibacy and priestcraft, and Villon lost no opportunity to expose the hypocrisy and misdoings of monks and abbesses; but the mocking statue does not mock at religion. It only seems on the point of repeating, with birdlike sputter (*gazouillement*), some bit of robbers' jargon, picked up even at that early period, or flinging the challenging line—

«Mais que te nuysoit-elle en vie,
Mort?»

(What harm did she in life to thee,
Death?)

or that other challenge—

«Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?»

If one were asked to search English literature for a single example of felicitous translation, leaving nothing to be desired, one might go far afield ere finding a better than Rossetti's rendering—

«But where are the snows of yester-year?»

of the pathetic refrain of the ‹Ballad of Old-Time Ladies.› Were this favorite ballad the only surviving portion of Villon's ‹Greater Testament› (his most considerable production), it would be almost enough to establish his claim to be regarded as a master. It shows also the most obvious limitations of his genius: he was without the modern feeling for nature; in this he falls far behind Ronsard. He clung to Paris as Lamb clung to London, and like Alphonse Daudet was uneasy away from it. He thought of the country as a place where—

«De gros pain bis viuent, d'orge, d'auoine,
Et boiuent eau, tout au long de l'année;»

(They eat coarse bread of barley, sooth to say,
And drink but water from the heavens shed;)

of winter as a time when one stays in the house:—

«Sur le Noël, morte saison
Que les loups se viuent de vent,
Et qu'on se tient en sa maison.»

Hence he has left us many portraits but no landscape. The rigid requirements of the ballad form do not fully account for the bare mention of names,—showing, it is true, how much may be done with slight material, but showing how little the poet cared for natural objects, unless in chance comparison with human beings. But there is plenty of heart in the ballad, nor does it appear that all the heart he had went into his verse. The man who could devote a ballad to the miseries of chimney-sweeps—«Poor chimney-sweeps have toil enough» (Poures housseurs ont assez peine)—was not without a flicker of sympathy for a fellow-being; and it is hardly possible to read in a candid spirit the beautiful ballad to the Virgin Mary, written at his mother's request, without the conviction that he felt the strength of that tie which in France, if anywhere, unites mother and son. The same ballad, and other noble passages, looked at in a first-hand way, prove that Villon was capable of no small degree of religious fervor. We have witnessed within the last decade the spectacle of a poet in the depths of self-indulgence turning eagerly to the consolations of religion,—and Paul Verlaine was a true child of the boulevards. Why assume that there was no sincerity in the prayers the fifteenth-century poet offered when the bell of the Sorbonne, striking the Angelus, bade him set aside for a moment the writing of the 'Lesser Testament'? Why attempt to prove, with M. Longnon, that Villon's three orphans, «hungry,» «shoeless,» «naked as a worm,» whom he harbored and endeavored to provide for in every way, were after all young people of means, who employed him as a tutor? Is it quite safe to condemn *in toto* that which openly and repeatedly and permanently criminates itself,—that which like Héloïse has dared call itself impure? On the other hand, M. Longnon's view of Villon, and even Mr. Payne's, often seems almost too indulgent; but the aim set forth in the latter's introduction has been nobly fulfilled. In his own words, he has «set ajar one more door, long sadly moss-grown and ivy-hidden, into that enchanted wonderland of French poetry, which glows with such springtide glory of many-colored bloom, such autumn majesty of matured fruit.»

Mr. Swinburne's rendering of the famous and ghastly 'Epitaph' of Villon, made when he was expecting to be hung with five of his companions, is simpler and on the whole closer than Mr. Payne's; with the exception of the line where the image —

«More pecked of birds than fruit on garden-wall» —

is strangely substituted for the «dented thimble» of the original reproduced by Mr. Payne. The poet Théodore de Banville puts into the mouth of Pierre Gringoire a 'Ballade des Pendus' scarcely yielding in fascination to the familiar 'Epitaph' of Villon. But the real poet-rogue of the fifteenth century was not Pierre Gringoire, as Victor Hugo and Théodore de Banville have led or misled us to think. A glance at the didactic verse and irreproachable life of the well-connected moralist Gringoire, makes it difficult to reconcile with his character the passages that represent him rolling in the mud of Montmartre or captivated by a pretty face at a window. Plain facts can never destroy the inimitable charm of passages that are their own excuse; but an observation attributed to Louis XI. — and it is not unlikely that he made it — shows that the scapegrace whose usual signature gave birth to the expression *villonnerie* bore off the palm from all other vagabond minstrels. The King declared that he could not afford to hang Villon; as the kingdom could boast of a hundred thousand rascals of equal eminence, but not of one other poet so accomplished in elegant speech and ingenious reasoning.

Undoubtedly the words were uttered at the most miserable moment in Villon's whole wretched career; when, if ever, he had literally touched bottom, let down by ropes to lie during the whole summer of 1461 in a reeking den, or rather ditch, of the castle of Mehun or Meung-sur-Loire, subjected to torture, and fed only on dry bread and water. The offense for which Thibault, Archbishop of Orléans, had caused him to be thus confined and corrected, seems to have been his implication in the theft of a silver lamp from a church in his diocese.

It was in this *cul-de-basse-fosse* that Villon is thought to have composed his 'Dialogue between the Heart and Body of François Villon,' — a ballad worthy to rank with Shakespeare's sonnet, 'Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth!' reminding us that Shakespeare and his Henry V. traditionally passed through a period of wild-oat sowing that Villon never outgrew. Had we only this ballad, instead of the considerable body of work he has left, we should hardly see less clearly into his real state of mind,—his horror and disgust at losing his moral footing, his sound judgment betrayed and belied by a fatal weakness of purpose and want of self-control. Certainly the words—

«We poets in our youth begin in gladness,
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness,»

apply at least as well to Villon and Verlaine as to

«Him who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plow upon the mountain-side.»

Villon's life had begun in 1431—in the very month (May), it would seem, when the great soul of Jeanne d'Arc went out; an event that drew from him the laconic and otherwise characteristic comment:—

«Et Iehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
Qu' Englois brulerent à Rouen.»

«The good Lorrainer the English bare
Captive to Rouen and burned her there.»

He had taken the degree of M. A. in the University of Paris. Twice sentenced to the gallows, he had escaped it only to enter upon a course of dissipation which confirmed him in the companionship of sneak-thieves, highwaymen, and women of the most depraved and abandoned class. He had certainly killed his man,—a priest, who however had dealt the first blow, compelling him to draw in self-defense, and who made intercession for him with his dying breath.

According to Villon's own asseverations, which must have had some foundation in fact, his rejection by the only woman he ever loved had been the beginning of all his troubles. He holds her responsible for his ruin; but turns her coldness and his chagrin to account by making them the motif of his 'Lesser Testament,' written at an earlier period than the 'Greater,' and representing him a martyr to love bequeathing real and imaginary treasures to a motley crowd of friends and enemies (all of them more or less notorious in their time), before taking flight from the scene of his disappointment.

The young lady in question, whom Villon calls his rose, but whose name was Catherine de Vaucelles, is thought to have been a niece of Guillaume Villon, the canon of the cathedral church of Saint-Bénoit, who took the boy under his protection, if not into his residence,—the Hôtel de la Porte Rouge, adjoining the Sorbonne. Whether the young student adopted the surname of his patron; whether they were actual relatives, or only fellow-townsmen of the village of Villon, still existing,—according to M. Longnon it is certain that the older man, who is known to have been of a gentle disposition, never had the heart to turn away the younger; but continued to aid him, and to be more than a father to him, long after his behavior had forfeited all claim to forgiveness.

In spite of the grave fissures in his character,—in a manner by reason of them,—he must at one time or another have enjoyed the favor of many far above him in rank. When the newly crowned monarch, Louis XI., passing through the town and stopping at the castle where Villon had been confined a whole summer, caused him to be set at liberty, he was only thirty years old. Yet the author of ‹Il n'est bon bec que de Paris› (There's no right speech out of Paris town), and other songs afterwards inserted in the ‹Greater Testament,› already enjoyed a popularity seldom granted a poet in his lifetime. Hence it is generally believed that the King's appreciation of good literature, coupled with Villon's apparent claim (whether founded on distant kinship or otherwise) to the special favor of the Bourbon family,—disposing them to occasional good offices in his behalf,—had more to do with his release than had the custom of pardoning a certain number of criminals immediately after ascending the throne,—a custom however that Louis followed in many other instances. Thus the king and the beggar came together for a moment;—that Villon could beg beautifully in verse is evident from various ballads petitioning, now for a trifling sum of money, now for the repeal of a death sentence; and it was a king who less than a century later caused the complete works of Villon, so far as they could be recovered, to be collected into a volume. This edition, which the scholarly discrimination of Francis I. intrusted to the poet Clément Marot, continued to be widely read till doubly overlaid and obscured by the triumph of the seventeenth-century writers, succeeding that of the ‹Pléiade› that Ronsard created. Even Scott,—who allowed few manifestations of genius or types of quaintness to escape him,—while regretting in the notes to ‹Quentin Durward› that it would have seemed hardly wise to introduce D'Urfé, nowhere introduces Villon. One cannot help thinking that this is precisely what he would have done in that romance of the time of Louis XI. and the banks of the Loire,—the very river that gave to the castle where the poet was confined a portion of its name,—had Villon and his works come out of their chrysalis a half-century sooner. But Mr. Swinburne had not then sung of the

«Poor splendid wings, so frayed and soiled and torn!»

The date of Villon's death is obscure. It seems impossible that he could long have survived the completion of the ‹Greater Testament,› at the close of which he bewails his bodily ills, brought on by inveterate indulgence at the table no less than by his summer of fasting in the dungeon of Meung-sur-Loire. His plundering and banqueting propensities were still further set forth in the ‘Repues Franches,’ —a series of ribald rhymes by an unknown author, written while the exploits of François Villon were still fresh in the minds of the people.

Vile as the language and imagery of Villon often are, it is worthy of note that nearly all his finest ballads are perfectly clean. The tree bore five or six noble apples. These, rather than the worm-eaten ones that weigh it to earth, have endeared themselves to modern readers.

A contradiction to the world, an enigma to himself, declaring in his despair that he understood all things save himself alone,—

«Ie congnois tout, fors que moy mesmes;»

in more than one ballad begging all men coming after him to have mercy on him; little dreaming how far his experimental methods, in a century when political disintegration and reunion kept the language in a state of fermentation, would determine the pitch of modern poetry,—he might almost have hurled the bitter antistrophe—

«. . . a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I die;
The friend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I.
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.»

From the ‘Greater Testament’

HERE BEGINNETH VILLON TO ENTER UPON MATTER FULL OF ERUDITION AND OF FAIR KNOWLEDGE

Now it is true that after years
Of anguish and of sorrowing,
Travail and toil and groans and tears,
And many a weary wandering,
Trouble hath wrought in me to bring
To point each shifting sentiment,
Teaching me many another thing
Than Averröes his Comment.

However, at my trials' worst,
When wandering in the desert ways,

God, who the Emmaüs pilgrims erst
Did comfort, as the gospel says,
Showed me a certain resting-place,
And gave me gift of hope no less;
Though vile the sinner be and base,
Nothing he hates save stubbornness.

Sinned have I oft, as well I know;
But God my death doth not require,
But that I turn from sin, and so
Live righteously and shun hell-fire.
Whether one by sincere desire
Or counsel turn unto the Lord,
He sees; and casting off his ire,
Grace to repentance doth accord.

And as of its own motion shows,
Ev'n in the very first of it,
The noble Romaunt of the Rose,
Youth to the young one should remit,
So manhood do mature the wit.
And there, alack! the song says sooth:
They that such snares for me have knit
Would have me die in time of youth.

If for my death the common weal
Might anywise embettered be,
Death my own hand to me should deal
As felon, so God 'stablish me!
But unto none, that I can see,
Hindrance I do, alive or dead;
The hills, for one poor wight, perdie,
Will not be stirred out of their stead.

Whilom, when Alexander reigned,
A man that hight Diomedes
Before the Emperor was arraigned,
Bound hand and foot, like as one sees
A thief. A skimmer of the seas
Of those that course it far and nigh
He was; and so, as one of these,
They brought him to be doomed to die.

The Emperor bespoke him thus:—
« Why art thou a sea-plunderer? »

The other, no wise timorous:—
   «Why dost thou call me plunderer, sir?
   Is it, perchance, because I ear
Upon so mean a bark the sea?
   Could I but arm me with thy gear,
I would be emperor like to thee.

«What wouldst thou have? From sorry Fate,
   That uses me with such despite
As I on no wise can abate,
   Arises this my evil plight.
   Let me find favor in thy sight
And have in mind the common saw:
   In penury is little right;
Necessity knows no man's law.»

Whenas the Emperor to his suit
   Had harkened, much he wonderèd:
And «I thy fortune will commute
   From bad to good,» to him he said;
   And did. Thenceforward Diomed
Wronged none, but was a true man aye.
   Thus have I in Valerius read,
Of Rome styled Greatest in his day.

If God had granted me to find
   A king of like greatheartedness,
That had fair fate to me assigned,
   Stooped I thenceforward to excess
   Or ill, I would myself confess
Worthy to die by fire at stake.
   Necessity makes folks transgress,
And want drives wolven from the brake.

My time of youth I do bewail,
   That more than most lived merrily,
Until old age 'gan me assail,
   For youth had passed unconsciously.
   It wended not afoot from me,
Nor yet on horseback. Ah, how then?
   It fled away all suddenly,
And never will return again.

It's gone, and I am left behind,
   Poor both in knowledge and in wit,

Black as a berry, drear and dwined,
Coin, land, and goods, gone every whit;
Whilst those by kindred to me knit,
The due of Nature all forgot,
To disavow me have seen fit,
For lack of pelf to pay the scot. . . .

When I of poverty complain,
Ofttimes my heart to me hath said,
"Man, wherefore murmur thus in vain?
If thou hast no such plentihead
As had Jacques Cœur, be comforted:
Better to live and rags to wear,
Than to have been a lord, and dead,
Rot in a splendid sepulchre."

(Than to have been a lord! I say.
Alas, no longer is he one:
As the Psalm tells of it,—to-day
His place of men is all unknown.)
As for the rest, affair 'tis none
Of mine, that but a sinner be:
To theologians alone
The case belongs, and not to me.

For I am not, as well I know,
An angel's son, that crowned with light
Among the starry heavens doth go:
My sire is dead—God have his spright!
His body's buried out of sight.
I know my mother too must die,—
She knows it too, poor soul, aright,—
And soon her son by her must lie.

I know full well that rich and poor,
Villein and noble, high and low,
Laymen and clerks, gracious and dour,
Wise men and foolish, sweet of show
Or foul of favor, dames that go
Ruffed and rebatoed, great or small,
High-tired or hooded,—Death (I know)
Without exception seizes all.

Paris or Helen though one be,—
Who dies, in pain and drearihead,

For lack of breath and blood dies he,
His gall upon his heart is shed:
Then doth he sweat, God knows how dread
A sweat, and none there is to allay
His ills; child, kinsman, in his stead
None will go bail for him that day.

Death makes him shiver and turn pale,
Sharpens his nose and swells his veins,
Puffs up his throat, makes his flesh fail,
His joints and nerves greatens and strains.
Fair women's bodies, soft as skeins
Of silk, so tender, smooth and rare,
Must you too suffer all these pains?
Ay, or alive to heaven fare.

BALLAD OF OLD-TIME LADIES

TELL me where, in what land of shade,
Bides fair Flora of Rome, and where
Are Thaïs and Archipiade,
Cousins-german of beauty rare,
And Echo, more than mortal fair,
That when one calls by the river-flow
Or marish, answers out of the air?
But what is become of last year's snow?

Where did the learn'd Heloïsa vade,
For whose sake Abelard might not spare
(Such dole for love on him was laid)
Manhood to lose and a cowl to wear?
And where is the queen who willed whilere
That Buridan, tied in a sack, should go
Floating down Seine from the turret-stair?
But what is become of last year's snow?

Blanche, too, the lily-white queen, that made
Sweet music as if she a siren were;
Broad-foot Bertha; and Joan the maid,
The good Lorrainer, the English bare
Captive to Rouen and burned her there;
Beatrix, Eremburge, Alys,—lo!
Where are they, Virgin debonair?
But what is become of last year's snow?

ENVOI

Prince, you may question how they fare
   This week, or liefer this year, I trow:
Still shall the answer this burden bear,
   But what is become of last year's snow?

BALLAD OF OLD-TIME LORDS

No. 1

(Following on the Same Subject)

WHERE is Calixtus, third of the name,
   That died in the purple whiles ago,
Four years since he to the tiar came?
   And the King of Arragon, Alfonso?
   The Duke of Bourbon, sweet of show,
And the Duke Arthur of Brittaine?
   And Charles the Seventh, the Good? Heigho!
But where is the doughty Charlemaine?

Likewise the King of Scots, whose shame
   Was the half of his face (or folk say so),
Vermeil as amethyst held to the flame,
   From chin to forehead all of a glow?
   The King of Cyprus, of friend and foe
Renowned; and the gentle King of Spain,
   Whose name, God 'ield me, I do not know?
But where is the doughty Charlemaine?

Of many more might I ask the same,
   Who are but dust that the breezes blow;
But I desist, for none may claim
   To stand against Death, that lays all low:
   Yet one more question before I go,—
Where is Lancelot, King of Behaine?
   And where are his valiant ancestors, trow?
But where is the doughty Charlemaine?

ENVOI

Where is Du Guesclin, the Breton prow?
   Where Auvergne's Dauphin, and where again
The late good Duke of Alençon? Lo!
   But where is the doughty Charlemaine?

BALLAD OF OLD-TIME LORDS

No. 2

Where are the holy apostles gone,
Alb-clad and amice-tired and stoled
With the sacred tippet and that alone,
Wherewith, when he waxeth overbold,
The foul fiend's throttle they take and hold?
All must come to the selfsame bay;
Sons and servants, their days are told:
The wind carries their like away.

Where is he now that held the throne
Of Constantine with the hands of gold?
And the King of France, o'er all kings known
For grace and worship that was extolled,
Who convents and churches manifold
Built for God's service? In their day
What of the honor they had? Behold,
The wind carries their like away.

Where are the champions every one,
The Dauphins, the counselors young and old?
The barons of Salins, Dôl, Dijon,
Vienne, Grenoble? They all are cold.
Or take the folk under their banners enrolled,—
Pursuivants, trumpeters, heralds, (hey!
How they fed of the fat, and the flagon trolled!)—
The wind carries their like away.

ENVOI

Princes to death are all foretold,
Even as the humblest of their array:
Whether they sorrow or whether they scold,
The wind carries their like away.

BALLAD OF THE WOMEN OF PARIS

Though folk deem women young and old
Of Venice and Genoa well eno'
Favored with speech, both glib and bold,
To carry messages to and fro;
Savoyards, Florentines less or mo',

Romans and Lombards though folk renown,—
I, at my peril, I say no:
There's no right speech out of Paris town.

The Naples women (so we are told)
Can school all comers in speech and show;
Prussians and Germans were still extolled
For pleasant prattle of friend and foe;
But hail they from Athens or Grand Cairo,
Castile or Hungary, black or brown,
Greeks or Egyptians, high or low,
There's no right speech out of Paris town.

Switzers nor Bretons know how to scold,
Nor Provence nor Gascony women: lo!
Two fishfags in Paris the bridge that hold
Would slang them dumb in a minute or so.
Picardy, England, Lorraine, (heigho!
Enough of places have I set down?)
Valenciennes, Calais, wherever you go,
There's no right speech out of Paris town.

ENVOI

Prince, to the Paris ladies, I trow,
For pleasant parlance I yield the crown.
They may talk of Italians; but this I know,
There's no right speech out of Paris town.

BALLAD THAT VILLON MADE AT THE REQUEST OF HIS MOTHER, WHEREWITHAL TO DO HER HOMAGE TO OUR LADY

LADY of heaven, Regent of the earth,
Empress of all the infernal marshes fell,
Receive me, thy poor Christian, 'spite my dearth,
In the fair midst of thine elect to dwell;
Albeit my lack of grace I know full well:
For that thy grace, my Lady and my Queen,
Aboundeth more than all my misdemean,
Withouten which no soul of all that sigh
May merit heaven. 'Tis sooth I say, for e'en
In this belief I will to live and die.

Say to thy Son I am his,—that by his birth
And death my sins be all redeemable;

As Mary of Egypt's dole he changed to mirth,
And eke Theophilus, to whom befell
Quittance of thee, albeit (so men tell)
To the foul fiend he had contracted been.
Assoilzie me, that I may have no teen,
Maid that without breach of virginity
Didst bear our Lord that in the Host is seen.
In this belief I will to live and die.

A poor old wife I am, and little worth;
Nothing I know, nor letter aye could spell:
Where in the church to worship I fare forth,
I see heaven limned with harps and lutes, and hell
Where damned folk seethe in fire unquenchable.
One doth me fear, the other joy serene:
Grant I may have the joy, O Virgin clean,
To whom all sinners lift their hands on high,
Made whole in faith through thee their go-between.
In this belief I will to live and die.

ENVOI

Thou didst conceive, Princess most bright of sheen,
Jesus the Lord, that hath nor end nor mean,
Almighty, that, departing heaven's demesne
To succor us, put on our frailty,
Offering to death his sweet of youth and green:
Such as he is, our Lord he is, I ween!
In this belief I will to live and die.

LAY, OR RATHER ROUNDEL

Death, of thy rigor I complain,
That hast my lady torn from me,
And wilt not yet contented be,
Save from me too all strength be ta'en,
For languishment of heart and brain.
What harm did she in life to thee,
Death?

One heart we had betwixt us twain;
Which being dead, I too must dree
Death, or, like carven saints we see
In choir, sans life to live be fain,
Death!

[End of the Greater Testament.]

BALLAD OF VILLON IN PRISON

Have pity, friends, have pity now, I pray,
If it so please you, at the least, on me!
I lie in fosse, not under holm or may,
In this duresse, wherein, alas! I dree
Ill fate, as God did thereanent decree.
Lasses and lovers, younglings manifold,
Dancers and montebanks, alert and bold,
Nimble as quarrel from a crossbow shot;
Singers, that troll as clear as bells of gold,—
Will you all leave poor Villon here to rot?

Clerks, that go caroling the livelong day,
Scant-pursed, but glad and frank and full of glee;
Wandering at will along the broad highway,
Harebrained, perchance, but whit-whole too, perdie:
Lo! now I die, whilst that you absent be,
Song-singers,—when poor Villon's days are told,
You will sing psalms for him and candles hold;
Here light nor air nor levin enters not,
Where ramparts thick are round about him rolled.
Will you all leave poor Villon here to rot?

Consider but his piteous array,
High and fair lords, of suit and service free,
That nor to king nor kaiser homage pay,
But straight from God in heaven hold your fee!
Come fast or feast, all days alike fasts he,
Whence are his teeth like rakes' teeth to behold;
No table hath he but the sheer black mold;
After dry bread (not manchets), pot on pot
They empty down his throat of water cold:
Will you all leave poor Villon here to rot?

ENVOI

Princes and lords aforesaid, young and old,
Get me the King his letters sealed and scrolled,
And draw me from this dungeon; for, God wot,
Even swine, when one squeaks in the butcher's fold,
Flock around their fellow and do squeak and scold.
Will you all leave poor Villon here to rot?

THE EPITAPH IN BALLAD FORM THAT VILLON MADE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS COMPANIONS, EXPECTING NO BETTER THAN TO BE HANGED IN THEIR COMPANY

Brothers, that after us on life remain,
Harden your hearts against us not as stone;
For, if to pity us poor wights you're fain,
God shall the rather grant you benison.
You see us six, the gibbet hereupon:
As for the flesh that we too well have fed,
'Tis all devoured and rotted, shred by shred.
Let none make merry of our piteous case,
Whose crumbling bones the life long since hath fled:
The rather pray, God grant us of his grace!

Yea, we conjure you, look not with disdain,
Brothers, on us, though we to death were done
By justice. Well you know, the saving grain
Of sense springs not in every mother's son;
Commend us, therefore, now we're dead and gone,
To Christ, the Son of Mary's maidenhead,
That he leave not his grace on us to shed
And save us from the nether torture-place.
Let no one harry us,—forsooth, we're sped:
The rather pray, God grant us of his grace!

We are whiles scoured and soddened of the rain,
And whiles burnt up and blackened of the sun;
Corbies and pyets have our eyes out-ta'en,
And plucked our beard and hair out one by one.
Whether by night or day, rest have we none:
Now here, now there, as the wind shifts its stead,
We swing and creak and rattle overhead,
No thimble dinted like our bird-pecked face.
Brothers, have heed and shun the life we led:
The rather pray, God grant us of his grace!

ENVOI

Prince Jesus, over all empoweréd,
Let us not fall into the Place of Dread,
But all our reckoning with the Fiend efface.
Folk, mock us not that are forspent and dead:
The rather pray, God grant us of his grace!

BALLAD OF THINGS KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

Flies in the milk I know full well;
I know men by the clothes they wear;
I know the walnut by the shell;
I know the foul sky from the fair;
I know the pear-tree by the pear;
I know the worker from the drone,
And eke the good wheat from the tare:
I know all save myself alone.

I know the pourpoint by the fell,
And by his gown I know the frère;
Master by varlet I can spell;
Nuns by the veils that hide their hair;
I know the sharper and his snare,
And fools that fat on cates have grown;
Wines by the cask I can compare:
I know all save myself alone.

I know how horse from mule to tell;
I know the load that each can bear;
I know both Beatrice and Bell;
I know the hazards, odd and pair;
I know of visions in the air;
I know the power of Peter's throne,
And how misled Bohemians were:
I know all save myself alone.

ENVOI

Prince, I know all things; fat and spare,
Ruddy and pale, to me are known,
And Death that endeth all our care:
I know all save myself alone.

BALLAD AGAINST THOSE WHO MISSAY OF FRANCE

Let him meet beasts that breathe out fiery rain,
Even as did Jason hard by Colchis town;
Or seven years changed into a beast remain,
Nebuchadnezzar-like, to earth bowed down;
Or suffer else such teen and mickle bale
As Helen's rape on Trojans did entail;
Or in Hell's marshes fallen let him fare
Like Tantalus and Proserpine, or bear

A grievouser than Job his sufferance,
Prisoned and pent in Dædalus his snare,—
Who would wish ill unto the realm of France.

Four months within a marish let him plain,
Bittern-like, with the mud against his crown;
Or sell him to the Ottoman, to chain
And harness like an ox, the scurvy clown!
Or thirty years, like Maudlin, without veil
Or vesture, let him his misdeeds bewail;
Or with Narcissus death by drowning share;
Or die like Absalom, hanged by the hair;
Or Simon Magus, by his charms' mischance;
Or Judas, mad with horror and despair,—
Who would wish ill unto the realm of France.

If but Octavian's time might come again,
His molten gold should down his throat be thrown,
Or 'twixt two millstones he should grind for grain,
As did St. Victor; or I'd have him drown
Far out to sea, where help and breath should fail,
Like Jonah in the belly of the whale;
Let him be doomed the sunlight to forswear,
Juno her goods and Venus debonair,
And be of Mars oppressed to utterance,—
As was Antiochus the king, whilere,—
Who would wish ill unto the realm of France.

ENVOI

Prince, may winds bear him to the wastes of air,
Or to the mid-sea woods and sink him there;
Be all his hopes changed to desesperance:
For he deserves not any fortune fair
Who would wish ill unto the realm of France.

BALLAD OF THE DEBATE OF THE HEART AND BODY OF VILLON

WHAT is't I hear?—'Tis I, thy heart: 'tis I,
That hold but by a thread for frailty;
I have nor force nor substance, all drained dry,
Since thee thus lonely and forlorn I see,
Like a poor cur, curled up all shiveringly.—
How comes it thus?—Of thine unwise liesse.—

What irks it thee?—*I* suffer the distress.—
  Leave me in peace.—Why?—I will cast about.—
When will that be?—When I'm past childishness.—
  I say no more.—And I can do without.

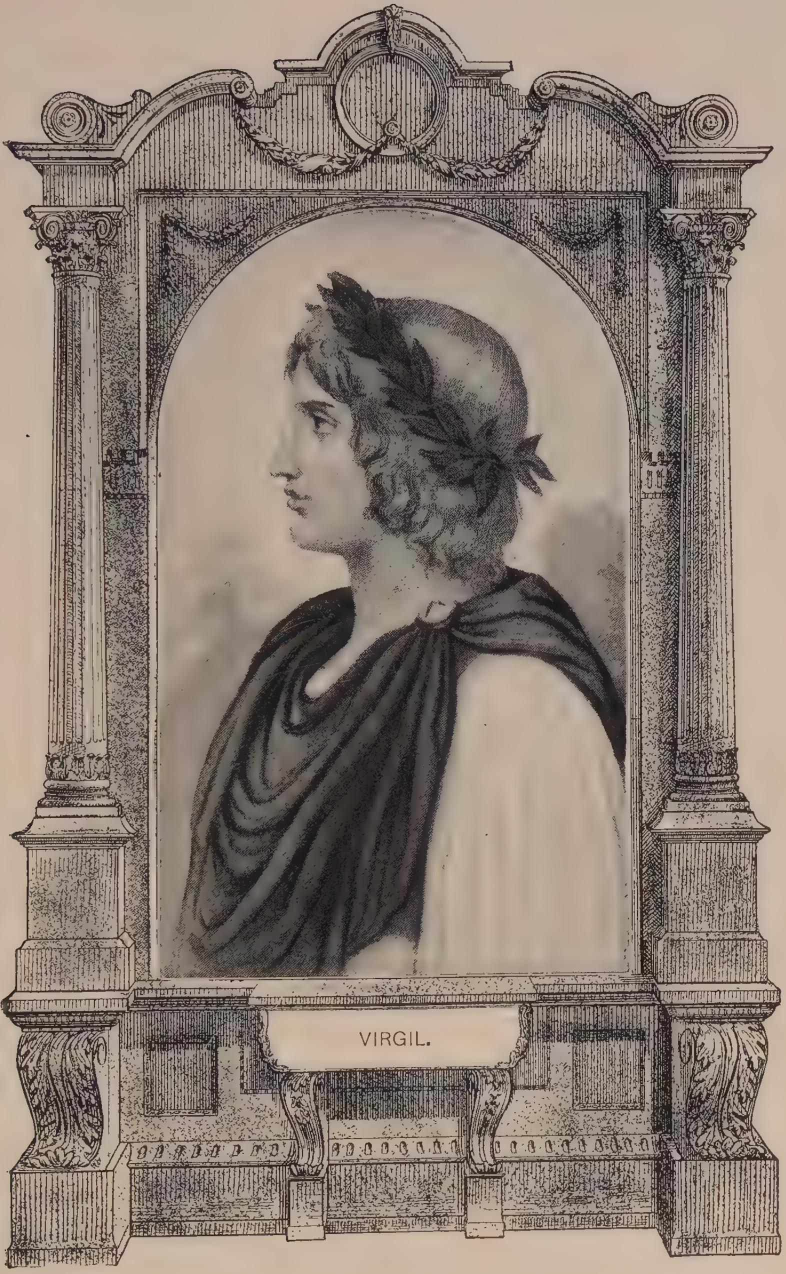
What deemest thou?—To mend before I die.—
  At thirty years?—'Tis a mule's age, perdie.—
Is't childhood?—Nay.—'Tis madness, then, doth ply
  And grip thee?—Where?—By the nape.—Seemeth me
  Nothing I know?—Yes, flies in milk, maybe:
Thou canst tell black from white yet at a press.—
Is't all?—What words can *all* thy faults express?—
  If 't's not enough, we'll have another bout.—
Thou'rt lost.—I'll make a fight for't none the less.—
  I say no more.—And I can do without.

Dule have I, pain and misery thou thereby:
  If thou wert some poor idiot, happily
Thou mightst have some excuse thy heart anigh.
  Lo, foul and fair are all alike to thee.
  Or harder is thy head than stone by sea,
Or more than honor likes thee this duresse.
Canst thou say aught in answer? Come, confess.—
  I shall be quit on't when I die, no doubt.—
God! what a comfort 'gainst a present stress!
  I say no more.—And I can do without.

Whence comes this evil?—Surely, from on high:
  When Saturn made me up my fardel, he
Put all these ills in.—'Tis a foolish lie:
  Thou art Fate's master, yet its slave wilt be.
  Thereof see Solomon his homily:
The wise, he says, no planets can oppress;
They and their influence own his mightiness.—
  Nay, as they've made me, so shall it fall out.—
What sayst thou?—'Tis the faith that I profess.—
  I say no more.—And I can do without.

ENVOI

Wilt thou live long?—So God vouchsafe me, yes.—
Then must thou— What?—Repent; forswear idlesse
And study— What?—The lore of righteousness.—
  I'll not forget.—Forsake the motley rout
And to amendment straightway thee address:
Delay not till thou come to hopelessness.
  I say no more.—And I can do without.



VIRGIL.

VIRGIL

(B. C. 70–19)

BY WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

PUBLIUS VERGILIUS MARO, purest, sweetest, gentlest, best beloved among all poets since the dawn of civilization, was born at Andes, a village near Mantua. His birthplace, his name, perhaps too his wealth of romantic imagination, may indicate Keltic origin. At any rate, his father was a man of humble station, some say a potter, who married his master's daughter, Magia. (This name of Virgil's mother helped on the wild mediæval invention of Virgil the magician.) As Transpadanes, the family naturally shared the general gratitude toward the great Julius, always their especial champion, who in 49 B. C. conferred full Roman citizenship upon the provincials. Virgil apparently never had personal relations with Catullus, Calvus, and their brilliant group of young aristocrats and anti-Cæsarian poets.

His education was not defective, certainly. He studied both at Milan and in Rome. A doubtful tradition makes him the fellow-student of Antony and Augustus. In a youthful poem, perhaps authentic, he takes reluctant farewell of verse, when devoting himself to philosophy as the pupil of the Epicurean sage Siron:—

«Begone, O Muses: ay, begone,—although
Sweet Muses; for we will the truth confess,
Sweet have ye been! And on my pages look
Ye yet again,—but modestly, nor oft.»

The undertone of doubt in these words proved doubly prophetic. Much in the tranquil Epicurean acceptance of life,—and much indeed of Lucretius's grandest harmonies and large view of nature's eternal pageant,—the Augustan poet-laureate always retained. Perhaps he even envies that most fearless and lofty of atheistic philosophers:—

«Happy the man whose steadfast eye surveys
The whole world's truth, its hidden works and ways,—
Happy, who thus beneath his feet has thrown
All fears and fates, and Hell's insatiate moan!»

(‹Georgics,› ii. 490–492, translation of F. W. H. Myers.)

These lines are generally supposed to be a direct tribute to Lucretius. But Virgil's intensely religious and even mystical spirit clung most anxiously to those two beliefs which Lucretius puts scornfully behind him: the faith in all-wise, all-powerful Divine beings, and in the soul's existence after death.

Virgil was certainly no untutored child of the soil, like Burns. Even more than his friend Horace, he everywhere reveals the loftiest refinement, and lifelong loving familiarity with the best in literature and art. He turns away, indeed, like Lucretius, and far more heartily than worldly-minded Horace, from the splendor and the noisy throng of clients in ministerial palaces, to seek refreshment on nature's heart.

«Oh, happy beyond all happiness—did they
 Their weal but know—those husbandmen obscure,
Whose life, deep hidden from strife of arms away,
 The all-righteous earth and kind doth well secure.
What though for them no towering mansion pours
At early morning, forth of its haughty doors
 And halls, a surge of courtiers untold,
Gaping on the rich portals, as they pass,
 Fair with mosaic of tortoise-shell, the gold
Of broidered vestments and the Corinthian brass? . . .

«But they are at peace in life, in guile untaught,
 And dowered with manifold riches. Theirs the ease
Of acres ample, and many a shady grot,
 And slumber of sweetness under sheltering trees,
And living lakes, and the cool of Tempe's valley,
And the lowing of herds are theirs continually;
Theirs are the haunts of game on the wooded hill;
 And theirs a hardy youth, unto humble ways
Attempered, and patient in their toil; and still
 The old have honor of them, and the gods have praise.
Justice, methinks, when driven from earth away,
Left her last footprint among such as they.»

(‘Georgics,’ ii. 458–474, version of Harriet Waters Preston.)

There is abundant evidence here (as in the pictures of Carthaginian splendor in ‘Æneid,’ Books i. and iv.) that Virgil knew the luxury of courts as thoroughly as he did the better beloved rural peace he craves. The last phrase just quoted, furthermore, reminds us of the melancholy tone, the vein of pathos, which all lovers of our poet remember so well. There was much in the conditions of the time to justify this; indeed, that sturdy patriot Livy, in his prelude, strikes a more disconsolate note than any single passage in the epic.

In truth, the best stage of the national life had already passed with the age of the two Africani. The lordship of Italy fully attained, Rome passed on to more fatal successes. She overthrew Carthage and Corinth in a single year (146 B. C.); but Cato was more than half right,—the national character was rapidly undermined by foreign wealth, and by culture too easily and swiftly won from without, not bred steadily from within. Doubtless Ennius's historical poem, or versified chronicle, if ever it shall come again to light, will seem rugged and inartistic to us, as it certainly did to most of the later Romans. Yet it was more truly an epic of manly freedom and patriotic pride than was possible under the early empire.

The empire itself indeed was generally, and rightly, welcomed. But it was—

> «As he who, with distressful breath,
> Forth issued from the sea upon the shore,
> Turns to the water perilous and gazes.»

Augustus's rule came as the only hope of peace and order after a century full of civic strife, beginning with the death of the generous far-sighted patrician radical, Tiberius Gracchus, under the clubs of an aristocratic mob (133 B. C.).

If ever conditions were such that the stanchest republican, who was a true and wise patriot as well, must welcome «the man on horseback,» it was in the year after the great Julius's death (43 B. C.); when the Roman State,—that is, the civilized world,—already rudely shaken and drained of its life-blood by previous civil wars, now lay utterly helpless, and rent asunder between the dissolute rapacity of Mark Antony, and the impracticable imperious selfishness of wouldbe reactionists like Cassius and Brutus. Rome and civilization seemed about to sink together into that rift of civic strife, too wide for any Curtius to close. It was at this juncture that the cold-hearted, long-headed boy Octavian—heir to Julius's name and fortune, far more than heir to his self-control and mastery of other men—came upon the scene. Pretending to side with the assassins of Julius Cæsar, he presently threw himself into Antony's arms; perhaps because he saw that Antony could more easily be first utilized and then dispatched.

The next dozen years were to cost the commonwealth much bloodshed still, in war and peace; many of her noblest lives were yet to be cut short by the soldier's or the bravo's sword: for we can hardly set earlier than the decisive battle of Actium (31 B. C.), the end of the century of turmoil opened by the death of Tiberius Gracchus under Nasica's bludgeon. Yet even so, the mighty emperor Augustus could point to a reign of fully forty-five years, marked by prosperity and union within, and by foreign wars in the main successful, when he passed on the firm-held sceptre to his unloved and unloving kinsman, and took his own place beside Julius among the deities of Rome. Did the august Augustus ever forget, as we are prone to do, his own identity with the dissolute stripling Octavianus Cæsar, the murderer of his tutor Cicero? Through this long period, — this cardinal half-century of the world's life, — the restoration of civic order, the rebuilding of the city and especially of the temples, the revival, so far as might be, of popular faith in the national gods, the glorification of Rome (and of his own house) in art and literature, were all purposes dear to Augustus's heart, all fused in the steady central purpose of his life. In all these efforts, Virgil the poet was as loyal and helpful as Agrippa and Mæcenas the soldier and diplomatist; and he met quite as generous appreciation as they, both from his imperial master and from the Roman people.

Horace never forgot, nor ceased to be proud, that he had led his battalion in the last hopeless struggle against the incoming despotism. Nor did he ever wholly surrender his sturdy independence. Those who love him best may well regret that his life fell in a time when his genuine manliness and liberty-loving frankness must be so largely hidden under the courtier's mask and cloak.

Virgil, on the contrary, more largely than any other great poet, we evidently owe to the sunshine — or perhaps more truly, to the hot-house warmth — of imperial favor. The marvelous charm of his verse, the exquisite commingling of clear-cut meaning and thousand-fold haunting suggestion, is indeed the unique and inexplicable gift of his genius. Yet his languid Theocritean mock-pastorals might have perished with him, — at best he would probably have remained the idle singer of a rather ignoble provincial life, — had Mæcenas not summoned him before a far greater audience, and urged him on to more ambitious themes.

Quite unlike Horace or any other Roman poet down to their day, Virgil in his first undoubted utterance strikes the note of utmost servility and adulation.

> «Yea, for a god shall he be evermore unto me, and his altar
> Often a tender lamb of our fold shall stain with his heart's blood!»

cries the shepherd Tityrus in the first Eclogue. It is the voice of Virgil himself, — one of the first to deify the half-reluctant Emperor. The cause for gratitude was most inadequate. Virgil's little farm by Mantua, wrongfully wrested from its loyal owner and bestowed on one of Octavian's veterans, had been tardily and reluctantly restored. Moreover there is a tradition of a second expulsion, attended with danger to the poet's life; and the urgent intercession of three powerful friends,—Varus, Gallus, and Pollio,—as well as Virgil's own appeal at Rome to the dictator, were required to secure this act of scanty justice (41 B. C.). Indeed, some scholars doubt if Virgil ever returned to his old home. Perhaps Augustus never lost sight of the gifted and pliant youth whose value he promptly realized.

We cannot hope to find in this timid courtly poet the exultant manliness and free stride of an Æschylus, an Ennius, or even of a Dante, unbending in homeless exile, fearless of speech even under imminent peril of death. More perhaps than any other artist, the heroic poet needs to breathe the air of freedom. Virgil the man, like his hero, is always conscious that his actual lot is, at best, but a second choice. Æneas tells Dido:—

«If fate permitted me to shape my life
To my desire, and freely end my woes,
The precious remnant of my folk, and Troy,
I then would cherish. Priam's halls would rise;
With home-returning band I would have built
Again our citadel,—for vanquished men.»

This note of mild regret for vanished hopes is so recurrent and constant as to impress every listener at last. It is indeed the tone not merely of the poet but of his whole race and generation. But submission to fate, the merging of the individual life in the larger and more lasting current of destiny, is in all ages a peculiarly Roman ideal. Perhaps his very limitations have helped Virgil to crystallize into epic, more than any other artist has ever done, the whole national life of so many centuries.

Honored and beloved though he was by all, Virgil's own earthly life hardly seems to have been a happy one. His health was delicate, his nature shy and sensitive, he had the bitterest misgivings as to his ability to master the high themes assigned him; and his life ends naturally with that unavailing appeal to his friends to destroy the uncompleted and unsatisfying national epic on which so many years of toil had been spent. But indeed the living Virgil is less real to us than the stately shade, so gladly descried by the Florentine pilgrim in the gloom of the Valley, the

«courteous Mantuan spirit,
Of whom the fame yet in the world endures,
And shall endure eternal as the world.»

The ten brief pastorals known as the 'Bucolics' or 'Eclogues' were published at Rome in 37 B. C. They are often mere paraphrases from the more sincere Greek pastorals of the school of Theocritus.

The shepherds' names are Greek; Sicily and Arcadia are often mentioned, but commingled with the scenery and life of Lombardy, or again, with thinly veiled allusions to Roman politics! The allegory is hopelessly confused with realism, and there is for the most part no adequate or serious purpose in the poems. These affectionate or abusive dialogues of Græco-Roman shepherd-courtiers, their responsive songs or contests for some rustic prize, are, none the less, rich in beautiful phrases and tender thoughts. Already the hexameter takes a more delicate and varied cadence than Lucretius or Catullus could give it. Even the imitation of the Greek originals, though recurrent, is never slavish. It is, at its closest, such free, joyous, artistic translation as delights us in Shelley's ‹Homeric Hymns.› Some of these poems date apparently from the earlier time of Virgil's obscurity. Others allude to passing events in the years 41 to 37 B. C. The tenth and latest is actually dedicated to Virgil's friend, the soldier-poet Gallus,— who is a gallant but incongruous figure, lying under the shadow of an Arcadian rock, among the Hamadryads and piping shepherds, Silenus, Pan, and all their company.

The most important among the Eclogues is the fourth, addressed to Pollio, announcing the recent or approaching birth, in Pollio's consulate, of a child who shall bring back the golden age. Professor Sellar thinks the actual child alluded to was the daughter of Augustus, the brilliant and infamous Julia. The imagery of the poem is often astonishingly like that of the Hebrew prophets. That the widespread expectation of a Messiah may have been known to the scholarly poet seems possible. Still there is no single touch in the poem which points unmistakably to Isaiah's influence. Every image can be paralleled in earlier Greek or Latin literature.

The next seven years of Virgil's life (37–30 B. C.) were devoted to the ‹Georgics.› The general purpose of these four books is the revival of agriculture in Italy; or as Merivale and Conington agree to put it, the «Glorification of Labor.» Instead of Theocritus, Hesiod's ‹Works and Days› was most largely influential here, though Lucretius's large and majestic treatment of natural scenery has also been closely studied. The four sections treat of tillage for grain, of tree culture, of cattle breeding, and the care of bees. Mythological digressions are gracefully introduced, the poetic and religious tone of the whole work is most perfect and harmonious, and in general no serious didactic purpose was ever more perfectly accomplished in delightful verse. Virgil is now the complete master of the hexameter. Its alien origin, its inherent difficulty, are forgotten. There are many noble and historic Latin words, even, which cannot be used in its frame. So much the worse for them. The sway of this rhythm became for centuries as tyrannous as the heroic couplet under Dryden and Pope.

Well might Tennyson end his loyal greeting to the Mantuan with the words:—

> «Wielder of the stateliest measure ever molded by the lips of man.»

The fourth Georgic closes with the story of the Greek shepherd Aristæus and his quest for bees. But Servius, the learned ancient commentator, says of the poet Cornelius Gallus, mentioned several times above: «He was so much the friend of Virgil, that the fourth book of the Georgics, from the middle to the close, was taken up with praise of him. This, at Augustus's bidding, the poet afterward altered into the tale of Aristæus.» The first part of this statement is made quite probable by the Eclogue already outlined: the latter is, it is to be feared, quite credible—though not creditable, either to patron or poet. Gallus's fall from favor and consequent suicide occurred in 27 B. C., so the earlier form of the poem must have been in full circulation for years; yet no other trace of it survives save this allusion. At present the fourth book opens with a renewed appeal to Mæcenas by name; and it closes with a half-dozen lines of modest autobiographical tone. By the parallel allusions, however, in this closing passage, to Augustus's victories in these same years, the poet contrives to intimate a lofty claim for his own task and accomplishment; perhaps as bold a claim as Horace's «monument more lasting than bronze.» Indeed, we are faintly reminded of Pindar's proud greeting to Hiero at the close of the first Olympian.

As a rule, however, the allusions to Augustus, and also to Mæcenas, in the Georgics, voice the humility and adulation of the courtier. Mæcenas's patronage is the poet's chief claim to honor or happiness. «Cæsar» is the especial care of the gods, among whom he is to take his place. This ascription of divinity to Julius and Augustus is particularly repugnant to our instincts. Full sincerity in these matters we can hardly claim for our poet. We could wish Virgil might have heard Tiberius's calm words: «I, conscript Fathers, call you to witness that I am but a mortal, and am performing human duties, and consider it enough if I fill the foremost place.» Perhaps in perfect freedom of utterance, Virgil would have confessed that only the imperial task of keeping a world in order seemed to him divine. We may recall that Cicero's popular orations, and Horace's public odes, are full of orthodox piety; but the familiar satires and epistles of the one, the private letters of the other, utterly ignore the divinities of the folk! In Virgil's case we have only his poems, however; and they indicate that the poet, if not the man, made a lifelong effort, at least, to acquire full belief in that overcrowded Græco-Roman pantheon wherein every generation sets up new figures,—whether dead rulers, vague abstractions like Faith, Honor, Necessity, or grotesque special guardians, from Roma herself down to Volutina the goddess of corn-husks! Much of allegorical meaning or poetic beauty he himself elicited from the faded forms of ancestral belief. Moreover, the patriotic poet is not an analytical critic nor a radical. His task is not to tear down whatever is traditional, popular, conservative, but to revive, complete, and beautify it.

These questions cannot be separated from any account of the great national epic, the Æneid, to which Virgil devoted the remaining years of his life (30–19 B. C.). The tale of the lonely Trojan survivor, Venus's son, escaping from the doomed city, and reaching Italy after world-wide wanderings, had been made familiar by poets and popular tradition for centuries. The direct descent of the Julii from this demigod Æneas was not to be questioned. A courtly national epic could build on no other foundation than this. The wonder is, that even under these cramping conditions the poet rose to the full dignity of his true theme. Larger than imperial patron or mythical ancestral hero, there marches through the epic the Roman people itself,—that rude martial clan, that strides ever on and on to the lordship of Latium, of Italy, of the Mediterranean, of the civilized world!

Even if we be inclined to regret that Virgil employed again the divine machinery, already familiar from Homer, to set his action in movement, we must all feel the noble scope of the long prophecy uttered by Jupiter early in the poem. Here Æneas becomes a mere link in the mighty chain. He is not even to be victorious nor long-lived in Italy. He shall reign in his own city for three years, his son for thirty, their Alban posterity through three centuries,—the younger Romans forever.

Again, even the tragedy of Dido's approaching death is forgotten in the memory of an infinitely grander drama, when from her dying lips, as an imprecation on her faithless lover, comes the prophecy of a deadly scourge for his descendants, destined to arise from her line, and more and more boldly the figure of Hannibal shapes itself in her vision.

Perhaps the most effective passage to be cited here, however, is the apostrophe of Anchises in the underworld to his descendants:—

> «Others may mold more deftly the breathing bronze, I concede it,
> Others out of the marble the living features will summon;
> They shall surpass us in pleading of causes, delineate better
> Motions of heavenly bodies, and tell of the stars and their risings.
> Thou, O Roman, remember to curb with thy empire the peoples.
> These thine arts shall be, and of peace to impose the conditions,
> Sparing them that yield, but quelling in battle the haughty.»

Though uncompleted in many details, the Æneid is no fragmentary work. Its whole plan lies clear before the reader, all the salient episodes are completely worked out. The after-world may read it by preference in parts, and even the poet himself set the fashion in his own lifetime. We could well spare, in truth, some of the rather petty and wearisome battle scenes in the later books; and in general, the Italian episodes can no longer interest us as they may have done the original auditors. Yet it is a pity that such stately figures as royal Evander and the maiden Camilla should ever become unfamiliar. The latter seems to have appealed especially to Francesca's grim Tuscan poet, and she is the first of Virgil's characters named in the Commedia. Upon the whole, however, the sack of Troy, the loves of Dido and Æneas, and the pageant of future Roman heroes, defiling like Banquo's posterity before Æneas's eyes, will doubtless always hold the supreme place in the hearts of Virgil's lovers. Perhaps this superiority of the part over the whole is inevitable in any poem of ten thousand verses. Certainly in this case we are justified, since the poet himself selected these three books (ii., iv., vi.) to read in Augustus's presence.

Professor Sellar, in his copious study of Virgil, is too rarely epigrammatic; but he makes in a single sentence a striking antithesis, calling Virgil perhaps the most imitative, yet one of the most original, among the great classic poets. This suggests a few words upon the striking position held by Virgil between the two most independent and creative of all poets, Homer and Dante.

It was apparently a general feeling among the Greeks, and especially with the Romans, that a thought once ideally well uttered, a phrase rightly turned, could no longer be improved, but became in large degree common property, belonging at last to him who could set it in its fittest association. This high privilege is used above all by Virgil. He borrows royally from nearly every older master of style. Yet the result, if a mosaic, at least remains clear, beautiful, even harmonious, in its general design and effect. His philosophic and antiquarian lore, again, is much more completely fused into pure and limpid poetry than Milton's similar treasures in 'Paradise Lost.'

Virgil's debt to Homer is especially heavy, and includes much that is essential, even, in the main framework of the plot. Of course there is no reproach of «plagiarism» in this statement. Virgil's audience was perhaps absolutely more familiar with Greek poetry than with Latin. Horace actually began his poetical career with Greek verses, as Dante and Petrarch did with Latin,—but sensibly reverted to his own speech. A Roman gentleman's son went to Athens as naturally as we go to college, to finish his education, which had usually been begun by a Greek tutor, slave or free. The striking confession in the oration for the poet Archias will be remembered: «For if any one supposes less fame is acquired through Greek poetry than through Latin, he is greatly in error; since Greek is read among nearly all nations, whereas Latin is confined within our own rather narrow boundaries.»

When Virgil, then, in his general plot, his incidents, his scenery, his similes, constantly follows closely in Homer's footsteps, it can only be regarded as a loyal acknowledgment of his supremacy. He often reminds us intentionally that his hero is retracing the route of Odysseus: as, for instance, Æneas picks up on the Sicilian shore a Greek of the Ithacan crew, left behind in their hasty flight from the Cyclops's cave a few weeks before; and he even catches a terrified glimpse of the blinded ogre Polyphemus himself. When the Trojan wanderer hurries by the Sirens' shore or Circe's isle without pausing, it may well be interpreted as a confession of Homer's unapproachable mastery there. In the Virgilian account of Troy's downfall, such a verse as

«The final day, the inevitable hour
Of Troy is come!»

is clearly an echo of Hector's foreboding—

«The day shall come when sacred Troy shall perish.»

In the seventh year of his wanderings Æneas comes unexpectedly upon Andromache, in her Grecian home of exile. She faints at the sight, and the whole interview is saddened with bitter memories. In the scene of farewell, Andromache's tenderest words are addressed to the boy Ascanius, cousin of her own son by Hector: that son who was murdered in the sack of Troy.

«O sole surviving image of my boy
Astyanax! Such eyes, such hands, had he,
Such features; and his budding youth would just
Have equaled thine in years.»

Now, Virgil does not feel that the pathos of these words needs the slightest hint of explanation: and rightly; for every Roman reader had present before him in imagination the immortal group of Hector with his wife and child, from the parting scene in Iliad vi.

Virgil often — but not always — justifies his claim to what he has borrowed. Thus the description of Achilles's shield in the Iliad is a beautiful series of idyllic pictures, but they form a mere digression and interruption, while the stage waits; whereas Virgil's genius has filled Æneas's shield with some of the most striking and noble scenes in Roman story. So the idea of taking his hero to the underworld is frankly borrowed from the Odyssey; but here again the ghostly array of future Roman heroes is wholly Virgil's own addition. To be sure, the general superiority of this grand Augustan picture of the Inferno to the mere pallid replica of earthly life offered us in the Greek poem, is largely due to the influence of Plato's splendid visions and noble philosophy. Still we may say in general that Virgil never *merely* borrows,—and at the worst he is always the most interesting of translators.

Dante's reasons for taking Virgil as his guide cannot be adequately discussed here. Above all else, indeed, the belief in the empire, in a supreme temporal power as a necessity to the orderly government of the world, glowed far more fiercely, as a lifelong unattained desire, in Dante's homeless heart, than in the more contented breast of the poet who could see Augustus daily in the flesh. This very descent of Æneas to Hades, just mentioned, suggested many details to Dante. The later poet is indeed too loyal in saying that he learned from his master «the fair style which has won him honor.» The style, like the metre, of Dante, is very remote from the more sweeping cadences of the Latin epic; and it owes astonishingly little to *any* master. But next only to Virgil's own poems (as Mr. Myers has remarked), the 'Inferno' and 'Purgatorio' will help us to an adequate appreciation of the Roman poet.

This peculiar position of Virgil between two of the world's greatest poets,—who never knew each other,—is one of his many claims to our tender regard. The general opinion agrees with Mr. Norton's statement on an earlier page, that Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare stand alone. Each belongs to the world, not to a nation; for each in a large sense created an ideal world of art. In his own class, however, as a poet in whose work a great nation's life, at least, has been worthily typified and interpreted, the Roman Virgil will doubtless long maintain the foremost position; perhaps until our own freer and fuller life shall deserve, and receive, an adequate artistic expression in epic.

William Cranston Lawton.

NOTE

It is impossible to cull, even, out of the countless loving tributes to Virgil's genius; extending from Propertius's prophecy of a masterpiece to surpass the Iliad, to the eager cry of affection uttered in old age by the last laureate, in whom so many of our poet's traits were repeated. Not only as a mage, but as «prophet of the Gentiles,» he was honored, all but sainted, in the Middle Ages. He has never been a lost author. Indeed, it is almost literally true, that had all his manuscripts vanished, Virgil's poems could have been recovered entire from the citations in later works of antiquity. There is, however, an abundance of MSS., even those illustrated by drawings, beginning in the fourth or fifth century.

Perhaps the one indispensable edition to-day is Conington's, in three volumes in the 'Bibliotheca Classica,' especially since the editor's generous taste has been reinforced by the more minute erudition of Nettleship. The latter is also the authority on 'Ancient Lives of Virgil' (Oxford, 1879). The ancient Virgilian commentators alone make a small library; and Servius, especially, is more readable and valuable than most modern editions.

Sellar's volume on Virgil in his 'Roman Poets' is diffuse but excellent. The most appreciative brief essay is by F. W. H. Myers, in his book 'Essays, Classical.' From these writers, or from Tyrrell's 'Latin Poetry,' abundant further references will be obtained. The French have a high appreciation of this first Romantic poet. Mention of Sainte-Beuve's early volume, and Boissier's delightful work, must suffice here. Comparetti's 'Virgil in the Middle Ages' opens a curious chapter of popular superstition.

Much of Virgil's greatest charm evaporates in any transfer to alien speech. He is, like all allusive artists, extremely difficult to translate at all; and no version can be satisfying to the classical critic. Longfellow has experimented in hexameter on one or two Eclogues. Miss Preston's 'Georgics' have a very free rhythm, and far more of the Virgilian charm than any other version. Among translators of the Æneid, Conington again claims the first place, with two notable renderings. We must protest against the brisk trot of "The stag at eve" when forced upon the stately Roman Muse, yet the sense is wonderfully well packed in. His prose rendering, again, is by no means prosily literal; and for many a famous phrase it almost achieves the impossible. Countless other versions there are, before and since Dryden's; but no accepted favorite. Morris's skillful performance disappointed his (and Virgil's) admirers. It is generally felt that the method of the translator and the spirit of the original are somewhat at variance. The version of Sir Charles Bowen, cited largely below, has much of the Virgilian spirit and grace; and is also an interesting experiment metrically, lacking only the last syllable of the dactylic line.

Every lover of literature will complete this catalogue for himself. The essayist desires to acknowledge especially his constant debt, here and elsewhere, to Schanz, and also to Von Christ (in the 'Handbuch der Alterthumswissenschaft').

THE FIRST ECLOGUE

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MELIBŒUS

TITYRUS, thou in the shade of a spreading beech-tree reclining,
Meditatest, with slender pipe, the Muse of the woodlands.
We our country's bounds and pleasant pastures relinquish,
We our country fly; thou, Tityrus, stretched in the shadow,
Teachest the woods to resound with the name of the fair Amaryllis.

TITYRUS

O Melibœus, a god for us this leisure created,
For he will be unto me a god forever; his altar
Oftentimes shall imbue a tender lamb from our sheepfolds.
He, my heifers to wander at large, and myself, as thou seest,
On my rustic reed to play what I will, hath permitted.

MELIBŒUS

Truly I envy not, I marvel rather; on all sides
In all the fields is such trouble. Behold, my goats I am driving,
Heartsick, further away: this one scarce, Tityrus, lead I;
For having here yeaned twins just now among the dense hazels,
Hope of the flock, ah me! on the naked flint she hath left them.
Often this evil to me, if my mind had not been insensate,
Oak-trees stricken by heaven predicted, as now I remember;
Often the sinister crow from the hollow ilex predicted.
Nevertheless, who this god may be, O Tityrus, tell me.

TITYRUS

O Melibœus, the city that they call Rome, I imagined,
Foolish I! to be like this of ours, where often we shepherds
Wonted are to drive down of our ewes the delicate offspring.
Thus whelps like unto dogs had I known, and kids to their mothers,
Thus to compare great things with small had I been accustomed.
But this among other cities its head as far hath exalted
As the cypresses do among the lissome viburnums.

MELIBŒUS

And what so great occasion of seeing Rome hath possessed thee?

TITYRUS

Liberty, which, though late, looked upon me in my inertness,
After the time when my beard fell whiter from me in shaving,—

Yet she looked upon me, and came to me after a long while,
Since Amaryllis possesses and Galatea hath left me.
For I will even confess that while Galatea possessed me,
Neither care of my flock nor hope of liberty was there.
Though from my wattled folds there went forth many a victim,
And the unctuous cheese was pressed for the city ungrateful,
Never did my right hand return home heavy with money.

MELIBŒUS

I have wondered why sad thou invokedst the gods, Amaryllis,
And for whom thou didst suffer the apples to hang on the branches!
Tityrus hence was absent! Thee, Tityrus, even the pine-trees,
Thee, the very fountains, the very copses, were calling.

TITYRUS

What could I do? No power had I to escape from my bondage,
Nor had I power elsewhere to recognize gods so propitious.
Here I beheld that youth, to whom each year, Melibœus,
During twice six days ascends the smoke of our altars.
Here first gave he response to me soliciting favor:—
«Feed as before your heifers, ye boys, and yoke up your bullocks.»

MELIBŒUS

Fortunate old man! So then thy fields will be left thee,
And large enough for thee, though naked stone and the marish
All thy pasture-lands with the dreggy rush may encompass.
No unaccustomed food thy gravid ewes shall endanger,
Nor of the neighboring flock the dire contagion infect them.
Fortunate old man! Here among familiar rivers
And these sacred founts, shalt thou take the shadowy coolness.
On this side, a hedge along the neighboring cross-road,
Where Hyblæan bees ever feed on the flower of the willow,
Often with gentle susurrus to fall asleep shall persuade thee.
Yonder beneath the high rock, the pruner shall sing to the breezes·
Nor meanwhile shall thy heart's delight, the hoarse wood-pigeons,
Nor the turtle-dove cease to mourn from aerial elm-trees.

TITYRUS

Therefore the agile stags shall sooner feed in the ether,
And the billows leave the fishes bare on the sea-shore,
Sooner, the border-lands of both overpassed, shall the exiled
Parthian drink of the Saone, or the German drink of the Tigris,
Than the face of him shall glide away from my bosom!

MELIBŒUS

But we hence shall go, a part to the thirsty Africs,
Part to Scythia come, and the rapid Cretan Oaxes,
And to the Britons from all the universe utterly sundered.
Ah, shall I ever, a long time hence, the bounds of my country
And the roof of my lowly cottage covered with greensward
Seeing, with wonder behold? my kingdoms, a handful of wheat-ears!
Shall an impious soldier possess these lands newly cultured,
And these fields of corn a barbarian? Lo, whither discord
Us wretched people hath brought! for whom our fields we have planted!
Graft, Melibœus, thy pear-trees now; put in order thy vineyards.
Go, my goats, go hence, my flocks so happy aforetime.
Never again henceforth outstretched in my verdurous cavern
Shall I behold you afar from the bushy precipice hanging.
Songs no more shall I sing; not with me, ye goats, as your shepherd,
Shall ye browse on the bitter willow or blooming laburnum.

TITYRUS

Nevertheless this night together with me canst thou rest thee
Here on the verdant leaves; for us there are mellowing apples,
Chestnuts soft to the touch, and clouted cream in abundance;
And the high roofs now of the villages smoke in the distance,
And from the lofty mountains are falling larger the shadows.

Translation of H. W. Longfellow.

MY HEART'S DESIRE

From the 'Georgics.' Copyright 1881, by James R. Osgood & Co.

My heart's desire, all other desires above,
Is aye the minister and priest to be
Of the sweet Muses, whom I utterly love.
So might they graciously open unto me
The heavens, and the courses that the stars do run
Therein, and all the labors of moon and sun,
And the source of the earthquake, and the terrible swell
Of mounting tides, all barriers that break
And on themselves recoil. Me might they tell
Wherefore the suns of the wintry season make
Such haste to their bath in the ocean bed, and why
The reluctant nights do wear so slowly by.

Yet if it be not given me to fulfill
   This my so great desire to manifest
Some part of Nature's marvel, or ere the chill
   Of age my abounding pulses do arrest,—
Yet will I joy the fresh wild vales among,
And the streams and the forest love, myself unsung!
Oh, would that I might along thy meadows roam,
   Sperchēus, or the inspirèd course behold
Of Spartan maids on Taÿgetus! Who will come
   And lead me into the Hæmian valleys cold,
Where, in the deep shade, I may sit me down?
For he is verily happy who hath known
The wonderful wherefore of the things of sense,
   And hath trodden under foot implacable Fate,
And the manifold shapes of Fear, and the violence
   Of roaring Acheron, the insatiate;
Yet blessed is he as well, that homely man,
Who knoweth the gods of the country-side and Pan,
Silvanus old, and the Nymphs their sisterhood!
   Him not the purple of kings, the fagots of power,
Lure ever aside from his meek rectitude,
   Nor the brethren false whom their own strifes devour,
Nor the Dacian hordes that down the Ister come,
Nor the throes of dying States, nor the things of Rome.
Not his the misery of another's need,
   Nor envy of his abundance; but the trees
Glad unto his gathering their fruits concede,
   And the willing fields their corn. He never sees
What madness is in the forum, nor hath awe
Of written codes, or the rigor of iron law.
There be who vex incessantly with their oars
   The pathless billows of ocean; who make haste
Unto the fray, or hover about the doors
   Of palace chambers, or carry ruthless waste
To the homes of men, and to their firesides woe.
One heapeth his wealth and hideth his gold, that so
He may drink from jeweled cups and take his rest
   Upon purple of Tyre. One standeth in mute amaze
Before the Rostra,—vehemently possest
   With greed of the echoing plaudits they upraise,
The plebs and the fathers in their places set.
These joy in hands with the blood of their brothers wet;
And forth of their own dear thresholds, many a time,
   Driven into exile, they are fain to seek

The alien citizenship of some far clime.
But the tillers of earth have only need to break,
Year after year, the clods with the rounded share,
And life is the fruit their diligent labors bear
For the land at large, and the babes at home, and the beeves
In the stall, and the generous bullocks. Evermore
The seasons are prodigal of wheaten sheaves
And fruits and younglings, till, for the coming store
Of the laden lands, the barns too strait are grown:
For winter is near, when olives of Sicyon
Are bruisèd in press, and all the lusty swine
Come gorged from thickets of arbutus and oak;
Or the autumn is dropping increase, and the vine
Mellowing its fruit on sunny steeps, while the folk
Indoors hold fast by the old-time purity,
And the little ones sweetly cling unto neck and knee.
Plump kids go butting amid the grasses deep,
And the udders of kine their milky streams give down;
Then the hind doth gather his fellows, and they keep
The merry old feast-days, and with garlands crown,
Lenæan sire, the vessels of thy libation,
By turf-built altar-fires with invocation!
And games are set for the herdsmen, and they fling
At the bole of the elm the rapid javelin,
Or bare their sturdy limbs for the rustic ring;
Oh, such, methinks, was the life the old Sabine
Led in the land, and the illustrious two,
Romulus and Remus! Thus Etruria grew
To greatness, and thus did Rome, beyond a doubt,
Become the crown of the cities of earth, and fling
A girdle of walls her seven hills round about,
Before the empire of the Dictæan king
Began, or the impious children of men were fain
To feast on the flesh of kindly oxen slain.
Ay, such the life that in the cycle of gold
Saturn lived upon earth, or ever yet
Men's ears had hearkened the blare of trumpets bold,
Or the sparkle of blades on cruel anvils beat.

But the hour is late, and the spaces vast appear.
We have rounded in our race, and the time is here
To ease our weary steeds of their steaming gear.

Translation of Harriet Waters Preston.

THE FALL OF TROY

From the ‹Æneid›

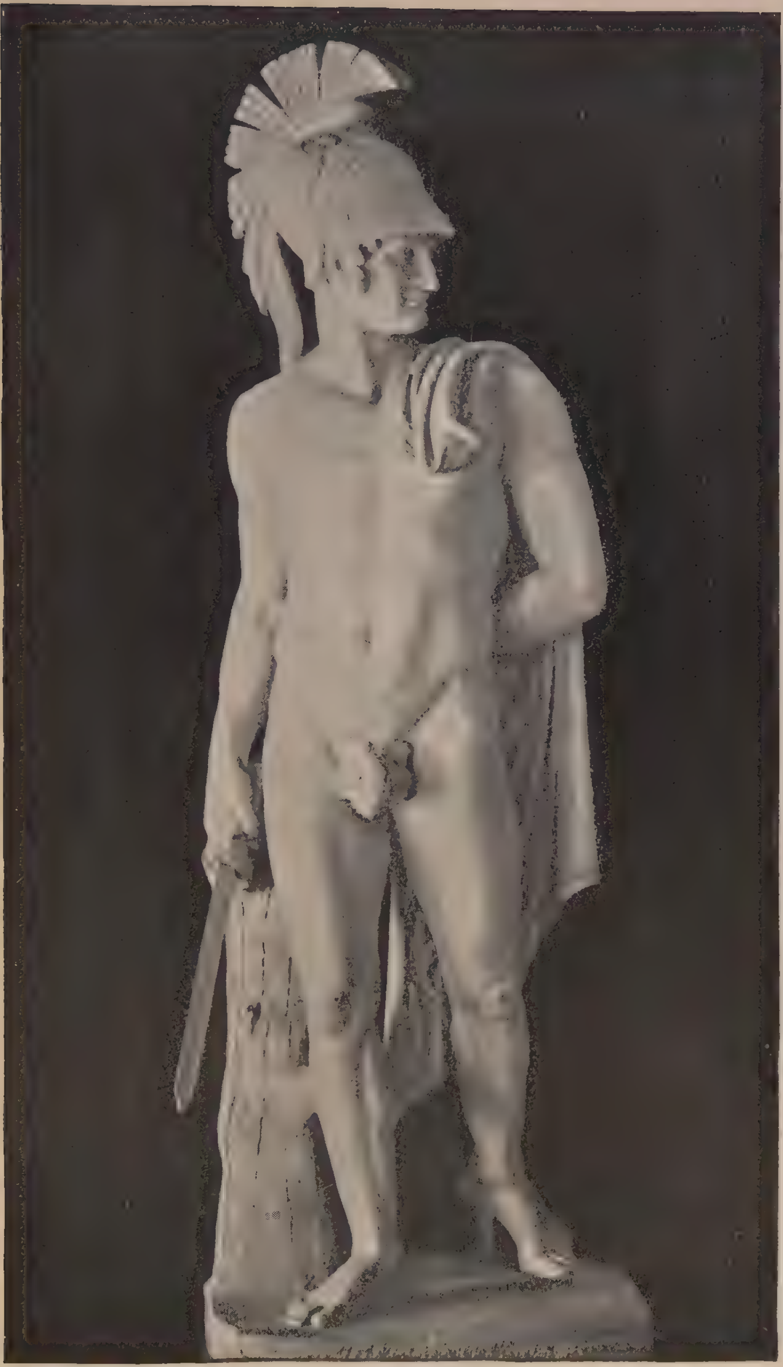
[Priam's palace is sacked, and the old king himself is slain, with his son, by Pyrrhus Neoptolemus, Achilles's youthful heir. The episode is part of the long story related by Æneas in Carthage to Dido the queen.]

FORWARD we fare,
Called to the palace of Priam by war-shouts rending the air.

Here of a truth raged battle, as though no combats beside
Reigned elsewhere, no thousands about all Ilion died.
Here we beheld in his fury the war-god; foemen the roof
Scaling, the threshold blocked with a penthouse, javelin-proof.
Ladders rest on the walls, armed warriors climb by the door
Stair upon stair, left hands, to the arrows round them that pour,
Holding a buckler, the battlement ridge in the right held fast.
Trojans in turn wrench loose from the palace turret and tower;
Ready with these, when the end seems visible,—death's dark hour
Closing around them now,—to defend their lives to the last.
Gilded rafters, the glory of Trojan kings of the past,
Roll on the enemy. Others, with javelins flashing fire,
Form at the inner doors, and around them close in a ring.
Hearts grow bolder within us to succor the palace, to bring
Aid to the soldier, and valor in vanquished hearts to inspire.

There was a gate with a secret door, that a passage adjoined
Thridding the inner palace—a postern planted behind.
Here Andromache, ill-starred queen, oft entered alone,
Visiting Hector's parents, when yet they sate on the throne;
Oft to his grandsire with her the boy Astyanax led.
Passing the covered way to the roof I mount overhead,
Where Troy's children were hurling an idle javelin shower.
From it a turret rose, on the topmost battlement height
Raised to the stars, whence Troy and the Danaan ships and the white
Dorian tents were wont to be seen in a happier hour.
With bright steel we assailed it, and where high flooring of tower
Offered a joint that yielded, we wrenched it loose, and below
Sent it a-drifting. It fell with a thunderous crash on the foe,
Carrying ruin afar. But the ranks close round us again,
Stones and the myriad weapons of war unceasingly rain.

Facing the porch, on the threshold itself, stands Pyrrhus in bright
Triumph, with glittering weapons, a flashing mirror of light.



HECTOR

Antonio Canova's statue, Venice

As to the light some viper, on grasses poisonous fed,
Swollen and buried long by the winter's frost in his bed,
Shedding his weeds, uprises in shining beauty and strength,
Lifts, new-born, his bosom, and wreathes his slippery length,
High to the sunlight darting a three-forked flickering tongue,—
Periphas huge strides near, and the brave Automedon, long
   Charioteer to Achilles, an armor-bearer to-day.
All of the flower of Scyros beside him, warriors young,
   Crowd to the palace too, while flames on the battlement play.
Pyrrhus in front of the host, with a two-edged axe in his hand,
Breaches the stubborn doors, from the hinges rends with his brand
Brass-clamped timbers, a panel cleaves, to the heart of the oak
Strikes, and a yawning chasm for the sunlight gapes at his stroke.
Bare to the eye is the palace within: long vistas of hall
Open; the inmost dwelling of Priam is seen of them all:
Bare the inviolate chambers of kings of an earlier day,
And they descry on the threshold the armed men standing at bay.

Groaning and wild uproar through the inner palace begin;
Women's wailings are heard from the vaulted cloisters within.
Shrieks to the golden stars are rolled. Scared mothers in fear
Over the vast courts wander, embracing the thresholds dear,
Clasping and kissing the doors. On strides, as his father in might,
Pyrrhus: no gate can stay him, nor guard withstand him to-night;
Portals yield at the thunder of strokes plied ever and aye;
Down from the hinges the gates are flung on their faces to lie.
Entry is broken; the enemy's hosts stream inwards and kill
All in the van, each space with a countless soldiery fill.
Not so rages the river, that o'er its barriers flows
White with foam, overturning the earth-built mounds that oppose,
When on the fields as a mountain it rolls, by meadow and wold,
Sweeping to ruin the herd and the stall. These eyes did behold
Pyrrhus maddened with slaughter; and marked on the sill of the gat
Both the Atridæ brethren. I saw where Hecuba sate,
Round her a hundred brides of her sons,—saw Priam with blood
Staining the altar-fires he had hallowed himself to his god.
Fifty his bridal chambers within,—each seeming a sweet
Promise of children's children,—in dust all lie at his feet!
Doors emblazoned with spoils, and with proud barbarian gold,
Lie in the dust! Where flames yield passage, Danaans hold!

«What was the fate,» thou askest, «befell King Priam withal?»
When he beholds Troy taken, his gates in confusion fall,
Foes in the heart of his palace, the old man feebly essays
Round his trembling shoulders the armor of bygone days;

Girds, now harmless forever, his sword once more to his side;
Makes for the midst of the foemen, to die as a chieftain had died.
Deep in the palace heart, and beneath heaven's canopy clear,
Lay a majestic altar; a veteran bay-tree near
Over it hung, and in shadow inclosed the Penates divine.
Hecuba here, and her daughters, in vain surrounding the shrine,—
Like doves swooping from heaven in a tempest's gloom to the ground,
Sate all huddled, and clinging the god's great images round!
When in the arms of his youth she beheld her Priam arrayed—
«What wild purpose of battle, my ill-starred husband,» she said,
«Ails thee to don these weapons, and whither fondly away?
Not such succor as thine can avail us in this sad day:
No man's weapons,—if even our Hector came at the call.
Hither, I pray thee, turn. One shrine shall shelter us all,
Else one death overwhelm us.» She spake, then reaching her hand,
Gently the old man placed by the hallowed gods of his land.

Lo! from the ravaging Pyrrhus, Polites flying for life,
One of the sons of the king! Through foes, through weapons of strife,
Under the long colonnades, down halls now empty, he broke,
Wounded to death. On his traces aflame with murderous stroke,
Pyrrhus—behind—the pursuer! Behold, each minute of flight,
Hand outreaching to hold him, and spear uplifted to smite!
When in his parents' view and before their faces he stood,
Fainting he fell; in a torrent his life poured forth with his blood!
Then—though about and around him already the death-shade hung—
Priam held not his peace, gave rein to his wrath and his tongue!
«Now may the gods, thou sinner, for this impiety bold—
If there still be an eye in the heaven these deeds to behold—
Pay thee,» he cried, «all thanks that are owed thee, dues that are meet,—
Thou who hast made me witness mine own son die at my feet,
Yea, in the father's presence the earth with slaughter hast stained.
Not this wise did Achilles, the sire thou falsely hast feigned,
Deal with his enemy Priam. His heart knew generous shame,
Felt for a suppliant's honor, a righteous suppliant's claim,—
Hector's lifeless body to lie in the tomb he restored;
Home to my kingdom sent me, to reign once more as its lord.»
The old man spake, and his weapon, a harmless, impotent thing,
Hurled; on the brass of the buckler it smote with a hollow ring,
Hung from the eye of the boss all nerveless. Pyrrhus in ire—
«Take these tidings thou, and relate this news to my sire:

Seek Pelides and tell him the shameless deeds I have done;
Fail not to say his Pyrrhus appears a degenerate son!
Die meanwhiles.» And the aged king to the altar he haled,
Trembling, and sliding to earth in his own son's blood as he trailed;
Twined in the old man's tresses his left, with his right hand drew
Swiftly the sword, to the hilt in his heart then sheathed it anew.
This was the story of Priam,—the end appointed that came,
Sent by the Fates,—to behold as he died Troy's city aflame,
Pergama falling around him, who once in his high command
Swayed full many a people, in pride ruled many a land,
Asia's lord. He is lying a giant trunk on the shore,
Head from his shoulders severed, a corpse with a name no more.

Translation of Sir Charles Bowen.

THE CURSE OF QUEEN DIDO

From the ‹Æneid›

[Queen Dido, deserted by Æneas, curses him and his Roman posterity. She foreshadows the career of Hannibal.]

Now from the saffron bed of Tithonus, morning again
Rises, and sprinkles with new-born light earth's every plain,
Soon as the sleepless Queen, from her watch-towers set on the steep,
Saw day whiten, the vessels with squared sails plowing the deep,
Desolate shores and abandoned ports,—thrice beating her fair
Breasts with her hand, thrice rending her yellow tresses of hair—
«Father of earth and of heaven! and shall this stranger,» she cries,
«Wend on his treacherous way, flout Dido's realm as he flies?
Leaps no sword from the scabbard? Is Tyre not yet on his trail?
None of ye warping the ships from the dock-yards, hoisting the sail?
Forth with the flame and the arrow! To sea, and belabor the main!
Ah, wild words! Is it Dido? Has madness troubled her brain?
Ah, too late, poor Dido! the sin comes home to thee now!
Then was the hour to consider, when thou wast crowning his brow.
Look ye!—The faith and the honor of him who still, as they say,
Carries on shipboard with him his Trojan gods on the way!
Bore on his shoulders his aged sire! Ah! had I not force
Limb from limb to have torn him, and piecemeal scattered his corse
Over the seas? his crews to have slain, and, banquet of joy,
Served on the father's table the flesh of Iulus the boy?
Even were chance in the battle unequal,—death was at hand.
Whom had Dido to fear? I had borne to the vessels the brand,

Filled with flames each deck, each hold, — child, people, and sire
Whelmed in the blazing ruin, and flung myself on the pyre!
Sun, whose flaming torches reveal earth's every deed;
Juno, witness of sad love's pains, who knowest my need;
Name on the midnight causeways howled,— thou, Hecate dire;
Sister avengers, Genius of Dido, soon to expire,—
Gently receive her and give to her crying misery heed;
Listen and hear these prayers! If the heavens' stern laws have decreed
Yon base soul shall find him a harbor, and float to the land;
Thus Jove's destinies order, and so fate finally stand; —
Harassed in war by the spears of a daring people and wild,
Far from the land of his fathers and torn from the arms of his child,
May he in vain ask succor, and watch his Teucrian band
Dying a death untimely! and when this warrior proud
Under the hard conditions of peace his spirit has bowed,
Neither of monarch's throne nor of sunlight sweet let him taste;
Fall ere time overtakes him, and tombless bleach on the waste.
This last prayer as my life ebbs forth I pour with my blood;
Let not thy hatred sleep, my Tyre, to the Teucrian brood;
Lay on the tomb of Dido for funeral offering this! —
Neither be love nor league to unite my people and his!
Rise! thou Nameless Avenger from Dido's ashes to come,
Follow with fire and slaughter the false Dardanians home!
Smite them to-day, hereafter, through ages yet unexplored,
Long as thy strength sustains thee, and fingers cling to the sword!
Sea upon sea wage battle for ever! shore upon shore,
Spear upon spear! To the sires and the children strife evermore!"

Translation of Sir Charles Bowen.

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE

From the ‹Æneid›

[Æneas meets in the Elysian Fields his father, Anchises, who shows him their most illustrious descendants.]

After the rite is completed, the gift to the goddess addressed,
Now at the last they come to the realms where Joy has her throne:
Sweet green glades in the Fortunate Forests, abodes of the blest,
Fields in an ampler ether, a light more glorious dressed,
Lit evermore with their own bright stars and a sun of their own.

Some are training their limbs on the wrestling-green, and compete
Gayly in sport on the yellow arenas; some with their feet
   Treading their choral measures, or singing the hymns of the god
While their Thracian priest, in a sacred robe that trails,
Chants them the air with the seven sweet notes of his musical scales,
   Now with his fingers striking, and now with his ivory rod.
Here are the ancient children of Teucer, fair to behold,
Generous heroes, born in the happier summers of old,—
Ilus, Assaracus by him, and Dardan, Founder of Troy.
   Far in the distance yonder are visible armor and car
   Unsubstantial; in earth their lances are planted; and far
Over the meadows are ranging the chargers freed from employ.
All the delight they took when alive in the chariot and sword,
   All of the loving care that to shining coursers was paid,
   Follows them now that in quiet below Earth's breast they are laid.
Banqueting here he beholds them to right and to left on the sward,
   Chanting in chorus the Pæan, beneath sweet forests of bay;
Whence, amid wild wood covers, the river Eridanus, poured,
   Rolls his majestic torrents to upper earth and the day.
Chiefs for the land of their sires in the battle wounded of yore,
Priests whose purity lasted until sweet life was no more,
Faithful prophets who spake as beseemed their god and his shrine,
   All who by arts invented to life have added a grace,
   All whose services earned the remembrance deep of the race,
Round their shadowy foreheads the snow-white garland entwine.

Then as about them the phantoms stream, breaks silence the seer,
Turning first to Musæus,—for round him the shadows appear
Thickest to crowd, as he towers with his shoulders over the throng,—
«Tell me, ye joyous spirits, and thou, bright master of song,
Where is the home and the haunt of the great Anchises, for whom
Hither we come, and have traversed the awful rivers of gloom?»
Briefly in turn makes answer the hero: «None has a home
In fixed haunts. We inhabit the dark thick glades, on the brink
Ever of moss-banked rivers, and water meadows that drink
Living streams. But if onward your heart thus wills ye to go,
Climb this ridge. I will set ye in pathways easy to know.»
Forward he marches, leading the way; from the heights at the end
Shows them a shining plain, and the mountain slopes they descend.

There withdrawn to a valley of green in a fold of the plain
Stood Anchises the father, his eyes intent on a train,—
Prisoned spirits, soon to ascend to the sunlight again,—

Numbering over his children dear, their myriad bands,
All their destinies bright, their ways, and the work of their hands.
When he beheld Æneas across those flowery lands
Moving to meet him, fondly he strained both arms to his boy;
Tears on his cheek fell fast, and his voice found slowly employ.

«Here thou comest at last, and the love I counted upon
Over the rugged path has prevailed. Once more, O my son,
I may behold thee, and answer with mine thy voice as of yore.
Long I pondered the chances, believed this day was in store,
Reckoning the years and the seasons. Nor was my longing belied.
O'er how many a land, past what far waters and wide,
Hast thou come to mine arms! What dangers have tossed thee, my child!
Ah, how I feared lest harm should await thee in Libya wild!»

«Thine own shade, my sire, thine own disconsolate shade,
Visiting oft my chamber, has made me seek thee,» he said.
«Safe upon Tuscan waters the fleet lies. Grant me to grasp
Thy right hand, sweet father; withdraw thee not from its clasp.»

So he replied; and a river of tears flowed over his face.
Thrice with his arms he essayed the beloved one's neck to embrace;
Thrice clasped vainly: the phantom eluded his hands in flight,
Thin as the idle breezes, and like some dream of the night.

There Æneas beholds in a valley withdrawn from the rest
  Far-off glades, and a forest of boughs that sing in the breeze;
Near them the Lethe river that glides by abodes of the blest.
  Round it numberless races and peoples floating he sees.
  So on the flowery meadows in calm, clear summer, the bees
Settle on bright-hued blossoms, or stream in companies round
Fair white lilies, till every plain seems ringing with sound.

Strange to the scene Æneas, with terror suddenly pale,
Asks of its meaning, and what be the streams in the distant vale,
Who those warrior crowds that about yon river await.
Answer returns Anchises: «The spirits promised by Fate
Life in the body again. Upon Lethe's watery brink
These of the fountain of rest and of long oblivion drink.
Ever I yearn to relate thee the tale, display to thine eyes,
Count thee over the children that from my loins shall arise,
So that your joy may be deeper on finding Italy's skies.»

«O my father! and are there, and must we believe it,» he said,
«Spirits that fly once more to the sunlight back from the dead?

Souls that anew to the body return, and the fetters of clay?
Can there be any who long for the light thus blindly as they?»

«Listen, and I will resolve thee the doubt,» Anchises replies.
Then unfolds him in order the tale of the earth and the skies.

«In the beginning, the earth, and the sky, and the spaces of night,
Also the shining moon, and the sun Titanic and bright,
Fed on an inward life, and with all things mingled, a mind
Moves universal matter, with Nature's frame is combined.
Thence man's race, and the beast, and the bird that on pinions flies,
   All wild shapes that are hidden the gleaming waters beneath,
Each elemental seed, has a fiery force from the skies;
Each its heavenly being, that no dull clay can disguise,
   Bodies of earth ne'er deaden, nor limbs long destined to death.
Hence their fears and desires; their sorrows and joys: for their sight,
Blind with the gloom of a prison, discerns not the heavenly light.

«Now, when at last life leaves them, do all sad ills, that belong
   Unto the sinful body, depart; still many survive
Lingering with them, alas! for it needs must be that the long
   Growth should in wondrous fashion at full completion arrive.
So due vengeance racks them, for deeds of an earlier day
   Suffering penance, and some to the winds hang viewless and thin,
   Searched by the breezes; from others the deep infection of sin
Swirling water washes, or bright fire purges, away.
Each, in his own sad ghost, we endure; then pass to the wide
Realms of Elysium. Few in the fields of the happy abide,
   Till great Time, when the cycles have run their courses on high,
Takes the inbred pollution, and leaves to us only the bright
   Sense of heaven's own ether, and fire from the springs of the sky.
When for a thousand years they have rolled their wheels through the night,
   God to the Lethe river recalls this myriad train,
That with remembrance lost once more they may visit the light,
   And, at the last, have desire for a life in the body again.»

. . . .

[The future heroes of Rome pass by: among the last, the Marcelli. The death of the young Marcellus, nephew and heir of Augustus, had recently occurred when this book was read by Virgil at court. The bereft mother was said to have fainted at this passage.]

«Lo where decked in a conqueror's spoils Marcellus, my son,
Strides from the war! How he towers o'er all of the warrior train!

«When Rome reels with the shock of the wild invaders' alarm,
He shall sustain her state. From his war-steed's saddle his arm
Carthage and rebel Gaul shall destroy, and the arms of the slain
Victor a third time hang in his father Quirinus's fane.»

Then Æneas,—for near him a youth seemed ever to pace,
Fair, of an aspect princely, with armor of glittering grace,
Yet was his forehead joyless, his eye cast down as in grief,—
«Who can it be, my father, that walks at the side of the chief?
Is it his son, or perchance some child of his glorious race
Born from remote generations? And hark, how ringing a cheer
Breaks from his comrades round! What a noble presence is here!
Though dark night with her shadow of woe floats over his face!»

Answer again Anchises began with a gathering tear:—
«Ask me not, O my son, of thy children's infinite pain!
Fate one glimpse of the boy to the world will grant, and again
Take him from life. Too puissant methinks to immortals on high
Rome's great children had seemed, if a gift like this from the sky
Longer had been vouchsafed! What wailing of warriors bold
Shall from the funeral plain to the War-god's city be rolled!
What sad pomp thine eyes will discern, what pageant of woe,
When by his new-made tomb thy waters, Tiber, shall flow!
Never again such hopes shall a youth of thy lineage, Troy,
Rouse in his great forefathers of Latium! Never a boy
Nobler pride shall inspire in the ancient Romulus-land!
Ah, for his filial love! for his old-world faith! for his hand
Matchless in battle! Unharmed what foemen had offered to stand
Forth in his path, when charging on foot for the enemy's ranks,
Or when plunging the spur in his foam-flecked courser's flanks!
Child of a nation's sorrow! if thou canst baffle the Fates'
Bitter decrees, and break for a while their barrier gates,
Thine to become Marcellus! I pray thee, bring me anon
Handfuls of lilies, that I bright flowers may strew on my son,
Heap on the shade of the boy unborn these gifts at the least,
Doing the dead, though vainly, the last sad service.»

Translation of Sir Charles Bowen.

MELCHIOR DE VOGÜÉ

(1848–)

BY GRACE KING

The Vicomte Eugène Melchior de Vogüé, born at Nice, February 25th, 1848, is the leader, to characterize him in the most summary way, in the reactionary movement which has been the historic event of French literature during the last quarter of the century. He was the precursor of the movement, the evangelist of it, before it found official expression in literature; when, in the day of national misfortune and national need, the eyes of serious Frenchmen were opened to the slough of sensuality, which, draining through their literature and art into their life and manners, had diseased their morality and enervated their will. Various names, when the reaction first stirred thought, were essayed to define or describe the movement,—such as Neo-Christian, and Spiritualization of Thought; it has been called Fiesolist, and likened to the Pre-Raphaelite movement in England: but as time progresses, any sectarian class or period appellation seems to be too narrow for what is essentially a national evolution, a patriotic as well as a literary renaissance. More than any other man in French literature, M. de Vogüé has been the medium to express the broad nationality and Catholicity of the new birth; and it would be hardly too much praise to say that in the clear-sighted conservation of religion and politics, in his life and works, he typified it.

On the first of January, 1890, in an open New-Year's letter «To Those who are Twenty Years Old,»—that is, to those who were born during the Franco-Prussian war,—he gives the keynote of his life and works: «All who are capable of it owe to our country mental, more imperiously even than military, service.» Twenty years before, he, a young soldier, in that crucial period just past his majority, was enduring the moral and physical suffering of defeat, the humiliation of prospective national and political annihilation. But he relates how the light shone before him on his road to Damascus:—

> «It is now nearly twenty years ago that the truth made itself known in a flood to the one who writes these lines, as to many others,—to all those who were being carried along the road to Germany on the night of the first and second of September, 1870. The miserable procession was descending the slopes that lay between Bazeilles and Douzy. Below us the bivouac fires of the conquerors starred the valley of the Meuse. From the field of blood where were camped the hundred thousand men whom we thought sleeping,

worn out with their victory, there arose upon the air one strong, one single voice from the hundred thousand breasts. They sang the hymn of Luther. The solemn prayer spread over the whole horizon, it filled the heavens, as far as there were fires — Germans. Far along in the night we heard it: it was so grand, so majestic, that not one of us could help thrilling with awe; even those, who, crushed by suffering and fatigue, were being driven out of what had been France,— even they forgot their grief for a moment in the unwelcome emotion. More than one of us, young as we were, and unripened by reflection, saw clearly in that moment what power it was that had vanquished us: it was not the girdle of steel cannon, nor the weight of regiments; it was the one superior soul, made up of all those different souls, steeped in one Divine national faith, firmly convinced that behind their cannon, God was marching with them at the side of their old King.»

«Methods of instruction and military training,» he exclaims, «Krupp cannon and Mauser guns — nothing but accidents, all those things! Accidental also the sagacity of a Moltke, and of his lieutenants. What made these instruments terrible? The serious submissive soul of the people who used them!»

From military service and imprisonment, Vogüé passed into what was intended as his career,— diplomacy; and was made attaché to the French embassy at Constantinople. Traveling through the East — Palestine, Syria, Egypt — among the aged monuments of human effort, the echoes of a vanished civilization, truth again came to him in a flood of new ideas: «History appeared to him not as a corpse to be dissected, a tomb of the Past to be explored, but as humanity itself,— alive, present, vital; a drama to be seen with one's own eyes, felt in one's own veins; . . . a thing of himself, of his brothers, of his country.» «Picturesqueness of aspect, memories recalled of distant ages, visions, intuitions, dreams,— these are the things of greatest interest to me,» he says frankly; in other words, the predominance of idea over fact, of the soul of the race over the soul of the individual. His letters written in the first glow of these illuminations from the East, and published in the Revue des Deux Mondes, made Vogüé's name known in the literary world of the day. From Constantinople he was transferred to St. Petersburg, where he remained several years; years of fruitful literary activity, his labors — Russian stories, and studies of Russian life — enriching not merely the thought and literature of his own country, but of Europe and America. The door of Russian literature, opened by Mérimée, had swung to again. Vogüé has propped it open; and the great stream of what he calls «the new realism pleading the cause of humanity,» that poured through its pages upon the arid mockery and materialism of French letters, was a divine irrigation upon desiccated seed. In the light of the harvest that arose therefrom in the literature of the world, it would seem impossible to do full justice to the importance of this one benefit conferred by Vogüé upon his fellow-men, without accepting his own belief that literature is a mission, not a profession.

The Exhibition of 1889 has been generally adopted as a convenient date for the manifestation of the literary reaction in France, and Vogüé's eloquent article upon it as its manifesto. For him the Exhibition was before all a problem of moral significance, an awakenment of energies in a people restored to their consciousness of self. «Let us hope,» he concludes, «that science will one day reveal the Central Motor, the motor whence are derived the sometimes conflicting applications of power. We shall then learn that there is not found the transmission of the sovereign energy,—that there the principle itself stands condemned. The laws of the outward universe are but the reflex of the moral world within; and the universal force once adequately distributed in its proper channel will inspire the human heart for all the purposes of human life. In this new order of things, Force must regain its ancient name; with us, as with the Romans, it must be called Virtue. We may find at last, that in truth all metamorphoses of Force are but the transmutations of Virtue.»

The following extract from an article on the Neo-Christian movement in France, written by M. de Vogüé for Harper's Magazine, is the most authentic word upon it and his connection with it:—

> «Whatever may be the effective result of the Neo-Christian crises, they will require a long time to come to a head; and when the religious idea has conquered the cultivated classes, it will have to reconquer by a slow process of infiltration the people at large, whom M. Taine has shown as returning to paganism. Popular beliefs have persisted obstinately beneath the unbelief of higher spheres, and yielded only gradually to the preaching of incredulity. They will be born again with the same slowness, as a consequence of preaching in the opposite sense. . . . We are in the presence of a nebula which is forming and wandering in the celestial space. The Creator always knows the hour and the place which he has marked for the condensation of this nebula into the solidity and brightness of an organized world. However imperfect and vague the nebula may be, men of good will prefer it to the gloom from which we are issuing. They are of opinion that the search after the ideal is a great sign of the raising up of France, where everything was on the point of sinking into gross realism,—both characters and minds, both public morality and intellectual productions. Those who have been the artisans of the present movement have the right to think that they have not lost their day's work; and since the writer of these pages has been often mocked for the part he has taken in the movement, may he be here allowed to claim openly his share in it.»

DEATH OF WILLIAM I. OF GERMANY

William I. lies beneath the dome in the centre of the cold bare edifice in which the Lutherans of Prussia pray. In the empty temple there is only death and God — unless those four statues with fixed gaze, as rigid beneath their armor, as immovable as he over whom they watch, be men. Let us suppose — the impossible — a stranger ignorant of the whole history of our times; he visits this monument, raises the military cloak, and asks who is this officer who sleeps here in the uniform of the First Regiment of the Grenadier Guards. Let us suppose — again the impossible — that one of these fixities should open his mouth in reply, and simply repeat what his schoolmaster had taught him of the Emperor's life. The ignorant visitor would smile at these fantastic words: he would think the sergeant was reciting some marvelous fable of old Germany. For the real of to-day will become the marvelous of to-morrow; future ages will be found admiring but incredulous, as we now are for that which was the real in the olden times: for we do not know how to look at the dream moment in which fate makes us live; habit and the use of each day blind our moral sight.

That which the soldier would have said to the stranger has been repeated to satiety for a week past. The history of William I. has been given in summary in all the papers, given in detail in books which are in everybody's hands. There is nothing for us to add; and if there were, should we have the power to do it? To dwell upon certain pages, the most necessary, the hand would tremble and the eye no longer see with clearness. A few words will suffice to recall the events of that long life, before we essay to judge it. Born in the decline of the other century,— days already so far distant from us that they are already the days of our ancestors,— a little cadet in a little State, this child of feeble health grew up on the steps of a crumbling throne. His eyes opened to see increasing upon the country and upon the world the oppressive shadow of Napoleon; they learned to weep over his country cut into pieces, over the agony of a mother a fugitive and mendicant in her own domains; his cradle is tossed about among the baggage of defeated armies: upon leaving this cradle he is dressed in the clothes of a soldier, to replace those whom the incessant war around him has mowed down; hussar, Uhlan, cornet, his little uniforms change as do the swaddling-clothes of other children; as soon as he can hold a weapon, at fifteen years of age, he is thrown into the conflict: and this is at the hour of fortune's turn against us; the reflux of Europe throws him upon France with the pack of kings and princes called together for the quarry: he fights — this living one of a week ago — amid those phantoms vanished into the depths of history; at the side of Blücher, Schwartzenberg, Barclay; against Oudinot and Victor: he enters Paris, and he probably dreams one of those foolish dreams of first youth, as did every officer of Napoleon's time; he sees himself — the Prussian captain, suddenly promoted generalissimo — taking as his share the glorious city, deciding upon the fate of the captive Emperor: and no doubt he laughs over his dream on waking; for the world is tired of war, — universal peace condemns the soldier to repose. William re-enters obscurity for a long time; his life disappears like those long rivers whose course we ignore between their source and their mouth, where they change name: he reappears a half-century later; at the moment where all generally ends with old men, he takes up the crown from the altar of Königsberg, and finding it too narrow for his head, he reforges it by sword-strokes over the fire of battles for seven prodigious years; he extends his kingdom as quickly and as far as the tenfold increased reach of his shells; he makes of his puny hereditary guard-house the vastest barracks that exist on the globe. After trying his strength on a defenseless neighbor, he fells with one hand the Holy Roman Empire, with the other the French power. He no longer counts his victories, — armies taken in nets, kings swept away before him: a second Napoleon, prisoner at the door of his tent, recalls to him the fall of the first which happened under his eye; and the old dream of the young captain is surpassed, when, encamped before a Paris surrounded by his troops and bombarded by his cannon, in the palace of Louis XIV., where his camp bed is placed, the princes of Germany bring the imperial crown to the new Cæsar. It would seem that this septuagenarian needs only to end in this apotheosis. But long days of glory and happiness are still reserved for him; while below him all other thrones change occupants, he remains incontestably the chief and patriarch of all kings, dictating to them his wishes, calling them by a nod to his court. His gorged eagle soars tranquilly above all reach; God protects him, he is invulnerable;

twice assassins strike and twice he is healed, at an age when a mere nothing kills. People grow accustomed to think him immortal, like his predecessor Barbarossa. Death grows impatient and prowls timidly about his chamber, but dares not strike; each morning is seen again the familiar head straight and smiling at the historic window, where he is interrogated to know whether nations will be permitted to live that day in peace. He is said to be ill: the following morning he holds a review; convokes a congress; goes to his frontiers to preside at an interview of sovereigns: he is said to be dead, and the world, told of his end, refuses to believe it. It is hardly longer ago than yesterday that the people were convinced that the Emperor of Germany, vanquished at last, slowly overcome by the eternal sleep, had finally submitted to the common law and consented to die. . . .

At this hour the judgments of men are indifferent to him. Their praise is worth just so much as those brilliant orders pinned to the tunic of death; just so much as the wax, the flowers, that die on his coffin. The Emperor is before his God. He meets accusing witnesses, many and redoubtable. It would be presumption to seek to divine the sentence of the Sole Judge, who alone has the right to pronounce it. Let us hope for him who sued for grace yesterday, as well as for all of us, that man is judged by the God in whom he believed — which does not mean that there are many. There is but one: but being infinite intelligence, he manifests himself under different aspects as diverse as our needs; he measures himself to the extent of our vision; being infinite justice and mercy, he holds a soul to account only for the manifestation made. . . .

The Emperor has gone forth through the Brandenburg gate; kings and princes have abandoned him, the people have dispersed, his escort has broken ranks. The Emperor continues alone through the Alley of Victory. He passes along the foot of a tower. We know of what it is made,— this fateful tower of bronze; the cannon still show their mute mouths jutting forth over the periphery in symmetric crowns; their souls are prisoners in the melted mass. They have waited long, these servitors of death, for William; they knew that death loved to change his trophies: they watch him as he passes. The horses hurry their steps toward Charlottenburg. Do they fear that in the solitary alleys of the forest, in the mournful fog of the winter's day, another cortége will form to replace the princely escort which no longer follows the car? A cortège of phantoms waits its chance in the shadow of the heavy pyramid from which it has come forth. Innumerable spectres: young men mutilated, mothers in mourning, every form of suffering and misery; and princes too, but despoiled, without diadems, led by an old blind king, who has gathered them up on all the roads of exile to come, the last to testify — the last of all, on the edge of the imperial tomb — to the other side of this glorious history. But why should we call up imaginary phantoms? There was one only too real that awaited the Emperor on the threshold of the mausoleum of Charlottenburg: destiny never devised a meeting more tragic. For one instant he appeared behind the window-panes of the palace: for the first and last time he saluted from afar the mortal body of his father; his eyes followed it as it went to the bed of rest of the Hohenzollerns. Then all vanished,— the fugitive apparition which had reaped empire as it passed, and the dead who slipped from the hands of his guards into the deep vault. One last salvo from all the cannon around, dogs barking after their masters, and the noise of his little day is finished.

Translated for 'A Library of the World's Best Literature,' by Grace King.

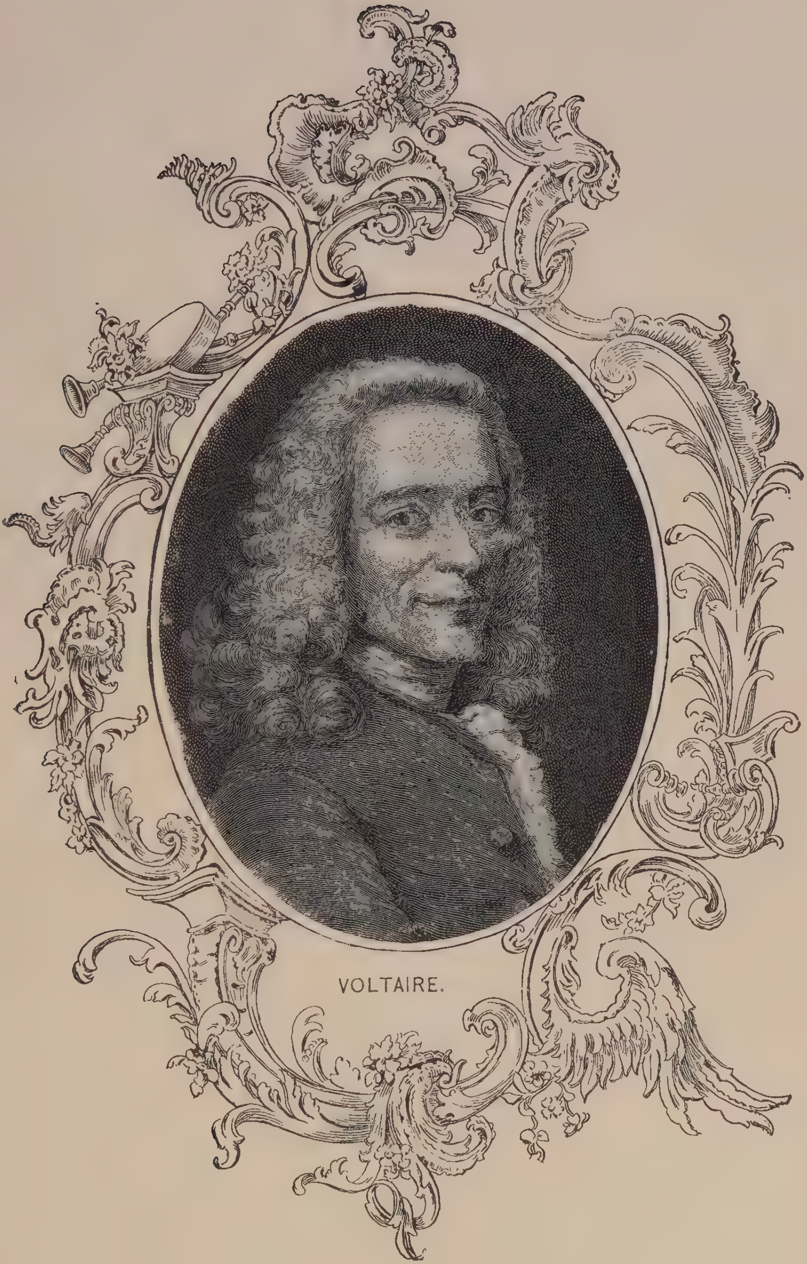
REALISTIC LITERATURE AND THE RUSSIAN NOVEL

Classical literature considered man on the summits of humanity, in the great transports of passion; as the protagonist in some very noble and very simple drama, in which the actors divided among themselves certain rôles of virtue and wickedness, happiness and suffering,— conformable to ideal and absolute conceptions about a superior life, in which the soul of man worked always to one end. In short, the classical man was the one hero whom all primitive literatures considered alone worthy of their attention. The action of this hero corresponded to a group of ideas,— religious, monarchical, social, and moral,— that furnished the foundation upon which the human family has rested since its earliest attempts at organization. In magnifying his hero for good or for evil, the classical poet was proposing a model of what should or should not be, rather than an example of what really existed. For a century, other views have insensibly come to prevail: they have resulted in an art of observation more than of imagination,—an art which is supposed to represent life as it is, in its entirety and in its complexity, and with the least possible prejudice on the part of the artist. It takes man in the ordinary conditions of life, characters from every-day routine, small and changeable. Jealous of the rigorous logic of scientific processes, the artists propose to inform us by a perpetual analysis of sentiments and acts, much more than to move us by the intrigue and spectacle of passions. Classical art imitated a being who governs, punishes, rewards, chooses his favorites from a select aristocracy, and imposes upon them his elegant conventions of morality and language. The new art seeks to imitate nature in its unconscious ableness, its moral indifferences, its absence of choice; the triumph of the general over the individual, of the crowd over the hero, of the relative over the absolute. It has been called realistic, naturalistic; but would not democratic suffice to define it?

No: a view which stopped at this apparent literary root would be too short-sighted. The change in political order (political change) is only an episode in the universal and prodigious change that is being accomplished in the whole world about us. Observe for a century the work of the human mind in all its applications: one would say that a legion of workmen had been busy in turning over, to replace upon its base, some enormous pyramid which was leaning upon its apex. Man has begun again from the bottom to explain the universe; and he perceives that the existence of this universe, its greatness and its ills, proceed from an incessant labor of the infinitely small. While institutions were returning the government of the States to the multitude, science was referring the government of the world to atoms. Everywhere in the analysis of physical and moral phenomena, ancient causes have been decomposed, or so to speak crumbled away: for the simple sudden agents proceeding with great blows of power, which once explained for us the revolutions of the globe, of history, of the soul, has been substituted the continual evolution of infinitesimal and obscure life. . . . Is it necessary to insist upon the application of these tendencies to practical life? Leveling of the classes, division of fortunes, universal suffrage, liberties and servitudes on an equal footing before the judge, in the barracks, at the school,—all the consequences of the principle are summed up in this word Democracy, which is the watchword of the times. . . . Literature, that written confession of society, could not remain a stranger to the general change of direction; instinctively at first, then consciously, doctrinally, she adapted her materials and her ideas to the new spirit. Her first essays at reformation were uncertain and awkward: romanticism (we must now acknowledge it) was a bastard production; it breathed revolt. In reaction from the classical hero, it sought its subjects by preference in the social depths: but, permeated still by the classical spirit, the monsters it invented were its old heroes turned wrong side out; its convicts, courtesans, beggars, were even hollower windbags than the kings and princesses of earlier times. The declamatory thesis had changed, but not the declamation. The public soon grew tired of it. Writers were asked for representations of the world more sincere, and more in conformity with the teachings of positive science, which was gaining ground day by day: readers wanted to find some sentiment of the complexity of life; beings, ideas, and the spirit of rationality which in our day has replaced the taste for the absolute. Thus realism was born. . . . Moral inspiration alone can make us pardon realism for the hardness of its processes. When it studies life with rigorous precision, when it unravels down to the minutest rootlets of our actions in the fatalities that cause them, it responds to one of the exactions of our reason. But it deceives our surest instinct when it voluntarily ignores that mystery which subsists above and beyond rational explanation: the possible quality of the divine. I am willing that the realist should affirm nothing of the unknown, but at least he should always tremble on its threshold. Since he prides himself upon observing phenomena without suggesting arbitrary interpretations of them, he should accept this evident fact: the latent fermentation of the evangelical spirit in the modern world. More than to any other form of art the religious sentiment is indispensable to realism; the sentiment that communicates to it the charity which it needs. As realism does not recoil from the ugliness and misery of the world, it should render them endurable by a perpetual pity. Realism becomes odious the moment it ceases to be charitable. . . . Oh, I know that in assigning a moral end to the art of writing I shall cause a smile among the adepts of the honorable doctrine of art for art's sake; — I must confess that I do not understand that doctrine.

To summarize my ideas of what realism should be: I seek some general formula to express both its method and its power of creation. I find only one: it is very old, but I do not know a better or a more scientific one, or one that comes closer to the secret of all creation: "God made man out of the dust of the ground." See how just the word is, how significant,— the dust! Without prejudgment or contradiction of detail, it contains all that we guess about the origin of life; it shows us those first thrills of humid matter in which was formed and perfected the slow series of organisms. Made out of the dust of the earth: that is all that experimental science can know. . . . Yes, but there is something else than experimental science; the dust of the ground does not suffice to account for the mystery of life; . . . the formula must be completed to account for the duality of our being: therefore the text adds, "And he breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living being." This "breath," drawn from the source of universal life, is the mind, spirit, the sure and impenetrable element that moves us, infolds us, frustrates all our explanations, and without which they are insufficient. The dust of the earth: that is the positive knowledge that we can obtain in a laboratory, in a clinic, about the universe, about a man; it goes very far, but so long as the breath does not intervene, a living soul cannot be created, for life begins only where we cease to comprehend.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by Grace King.



VOLTAIRE.

VOLTAIRE

(1694–1778)

BY ADOLPHE COHN

VOLTAIRE, whose real name was François Marie Arouet, is certainly the most influential of the numerous writers that have been produced by France. He was born in Paris on November 21st, 1694, and died in the same city on May 30th, 1778. At the time of his birth Louis XIV. was still the absolute ruler of France; no one dared to question his divine right to the crown, or to resist his clearly expressed will. When he died, public opinion had become so irresistible a power that King Louis XVI. had been compelled, much against his desire, to assist the revolted colonies of North America in their struggle against the English King; and that eleven years later the French also determined to begin a revolution, the object of which was to establish free and equal government over the ruins of the old system. Of the transformation which had taken place between the dates of 1694 and 1778, Voltaire had been the chief artisan.

His family, like that of most of the great writers of France, belonged to the ranks of the middle class. His father had, as a notary and as the confidential legal adviser of numerous influential families, amassed a comfortable fortune; and occupied late in life an honorable official position, which connected him with the highest court of law in France,— the Parliament of Paris. His mother, Catherine Daumars, was connected with several families of the nobility. He received the best education which a French bourgeois could then give to his son. His chief educators were the Jesuit Fathers,— in whose best college, the College Louis-le-Grand, he received all his early schooling,— and a certain Abbé de Châteauneuf, a worldly abbé of aristocratic birth, to whose care he had been intrusted by his mother, whom he lost when only seven years of age. The abbé made it his business to introduce his young charge into the most aristocratic and witty, but withal, dissolute circles of French society. The young man's wit and inborn charm of manners, his ease in composing pleasing and light verses, his close attention whenever older people spoke of whatever important events they had acted in or witnessed, made him at once a very great favorite.

Louis XIV. died in 1715, when young Arouet was just coming of age. He had not published anything yet, but had already determined to make a name for himself as a man of letters, and not simply to increase the family's fortune as a law practitioner, according to his father's desire. He already possessed more worldly experience than a great many older men. A journey in Holland, which he had made as secretary to the French ambassador there, Marquis de Châteauneuf,—and which had come abruptly to an end on account of a somewhat pathetic love affair with a Protestant maiden, Mademoiselle Olympe Dunoyer,—had enabled him to acquire a knowledge of what was perhaps most interesting in Europe at that time: the republican government of the Netherlands, and the society of Huguenot refugees who had left France twenty or thirty years before rather than abandon their faith.

He was then ready to present to the public whatever ideas of his he deemed sufficiently matured for publication. But he was soon to discover, at his own expense, what is the meaning of absolute power, and what a disturbing force it becomes in the hands of incompetent rulers. The duties of royalty were then performed by the Duke of Orleans, regent of France during the minority of his child cousin, King Louis XV. Able and witty, but without any principle of morality, the regent laid himself open to criticism of the sharpest kind; and young Arouet was not the most merciful of his judges. Twice the young man, on account of his freedom of utterance, received peremptory orders to leave Paris and reside at some spot designated by the government; a third time, for a Latin inscription which he had written, and some French verses, the authorship of which he was erroneously credited with, he was arrested and sent as a State prisoner to the Bastille, where he remained nearly a year (1717–18). A few months after the end of his imprisonment he suddenly became famous. His tragedy of 'Œdipus' had been performed with the greatest success, and he was hailed as the legitimate successor of Corneille and Racine (1718).

Several years followed of intense literary activity, during which he gave a number of plays and composed numerous poems, two of which for the first time presented some of the ideas with which his name has become identified,—the 'Epistle to Urania,' which sets forth some of the principles of natural religion, and the epic poem which later, when more developed, became the 'Henriade.' The latter work, of which King Henry IV. of France is the hero, is from beginning to end an eloquent plea for religious toleration, and a no less eloquent denunciation of religious fanaticism. Its most celebrated passage is the narrative of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's night, related by Henry of Navarre to Queen Elizabeth.

He was soon sent to the Bastille again (1726), on account of a quarrel with a disreputable young nobleman, the Chevalier de Rohan, who had had Voltaire beaten almost to death by his servants. He was released, however, a few days later, on a promise that he would at once set out for England, where he resided a little over two years (1726–28). These were for him years of study. He managed to acquaint himself with the language, literature, institutions, and social life of England, as few travelers have ever done in so short a time. Before he left the country he succeeded in writing English very creditably; as is shown by two essays that he published while there, one on the civil wars of France, the other on epic poetry. Their object was to prepare the English public for the issuing of a new and enlarged edition of his poem on Henry IV., which was dedicated to the Queen of England.

He carried back to France a small volume, the effect of which on the reading public of continental Europe, but especially of France, cannot be overestimated. It is a collection of twenty-four letters, which were first published in an English translation with the title of ‹Letters concerning the English Nation,› and afterwards in France under a different title,—‹Philosophical Letters.› His object in this work was to show to his countrymen that national peace, happiness, and power, were not dependent upon the existence of such a government as they were living under. The main points to which he called their attention were individual liberty, as protected by the habeas corpus act; political liberty, as secured by the Magna Charta; religious toleration, as demonstrated by the existence in the country of numerous Christian denominations, living at peace with each other; respect for men of letters, as shown by the high positions filled in the State by such men as Joseph Addison and Matthew Prior; the existence of an English literature, then all-but unknown in France, which heard from him for the first tim the name of Shakespeare; the existence of English philosophy with Locke, and of English science with Sir Isaac Newton, whose theory of universal attraction he popularized through years of untiring efforts; etc. No wonder such a book was not very acceptable to the autocratic government of France. Its publication was not authorized; an unauthorized edition however appeared in 1734, and Voltaire, as the writer had come to call himself since the performance of ‹Œdipus,› came near being sent to the Bastille for the third time.

He was then a rich man. Influential friends had helped him to invest his share of his father's estate partly in speculative ventures, partly in military contracts. He lived in a somewhat grand style in the château of Cirey, in Lorraine; which was the property of a great admirer of his, the Marquise du Châtelet, who translated Newton's ‹Principia› into French. He composed there a number of plays.

He had already had, however, his greatest dramatic triumph with ‘Zaïre’; a play in which, even more than in his ‘Brutus,’ we can discern the influence of Shakespeare. Among the plays that followed, the most remarkable were ‘Mahomet,’ a plea against fanaticism, which he dedicated to Pope Benedict XIV.; and ‘Alzire,’ a new plea for religious toleration, hardly less eloquent than the ‘Henriade.’ He had also published his first historical work, a history of Charles XII. of Sweden; a marvelous piece of narrative, in which the philosophical historian already appears in many a reflection upon the folly of war and the sufferings it entails upon the people. The ideas he stood for were more clearly expressed, however, in such works as his philosophical poems; ‘Discourses upon Man,’ an imitation of Pope's ‘Essay on Man’; and his ‘Elements of the Philosophy of Newton.’ His increasing popularity compelled even the court to grant him recognition. In 1745 he was appointed historiographer of France, in 1746 he was elected a member of the French Academy, and in the same year made by the King a gentleman of his bedchamber. This constituted him a member of the nobility.

His favor at court lasted but a short time, however. He had soon to hide in the residence of his friend, the Duchesse du Maine, where he wrote his first philosophical tales, ‘Zadig’ and ‘Micromegas’; new vehicles for the ideas that had already been expressed in the ‘Henriade,’ the ‘Philosophical Letters,’ the ‘Charles XII.,’ etc.

Madame du Châtelet's death (1749) brought about a great change in his life. After a short stay in Paris he accepted an invitation from King Frederick II. of Prussia, who had since 1736 been one of his regular correspondents, and who had for years begged him to take up his residence at the Prussian court. Voltaire lived at Berlin and Potsdam about three years, the most important event in which was his publication of the ‘Age of Louis XIV.’; a historical work which he had been perfecting for upwards of twenty years, and which was received by the public as no historical work had ever been. Even to-day it retains its rank as one of the most interesting and one of the broadest books of history ever written. To his contemporaries, who knew only the dreariest compilations of literary hacks and pedants, it was a revelation of what history could be. Voltaire did not simply narrate, he passed judgment; though undoubtedly prejudiced in favor of Louis XIV., he severely censured his love of war and expenditure and his terrible religious fanaticism. His information, which he had collected with the utmost industry, and made use of with the greatest candor, was extensive and remarkably accurate for the time.

Had he done nothing else in Berlin, he and Frederick might have remained good friends. But he mercilessly ridiculed another Frenchman, the learned Maupertuis, whom Frederick had made president of the Berlin Academy; and this, joined to several transactions in which Voltaire showed himself remarkably indiscreet, and also more rapacious than was consistent with self-respect, led to an estrangement between the two men, who had originally met as the warmest of friends. In regard to Maupertuis, however, it must be said that Voltaire was entirely in the right; for his pamphlet against his compatriot, the 'Diatribe of Doctor Akakia,' was simply one of the writings in which he defended a young Swiss servant named Koenig against an unjust persecution, of which Maupertuis was the sole author.

He left Berlin in 1753, and returned to France. On his way there he had been arrested in Frankfort, at the request of Frederick, and made to undergo without cause the most humiliating treatment. In France he spent nearly two years a homeless wanderer. King Louis XV. would not allow him in Paris. He saw safety nowhere else than in Switzerland, and finally settled there, near the lake of Geneva. A few years later (1758) he acquired the domains of Ferney and Tournay,—situated in France, but very near Geneva,—which he made a kind of little kingdom of his own, and where he spent the last twenty years of his life (1758–1778).

There he was soon acknowledged the intellectual centre of Europe. He was untiring in his activity; and feeling better protected against the blows of autocracy, he displayed more energy than ever in his fight for human freedom. The most important works belonging to the last period of his life are his 'Essay on Manners,'—a work on Universal History, especially from the death of Charlemagne (814) to the accession of Louis XIV. (1643); and the 'Philosophical Dictionary,' a collection of short articles written by him on all sorts of subjects of a philosophical nature. It is in the latter work that are found the passages in which Voltaire, in spite of the opinion held of him by many people who declare him to have been an atheist, most strongly expressed his faith in the existence of a God, Father of all men; and used every argument at his disposal against atheism.

Literary activity did not fill all Voltaire's time at Ferney. His fight against tyranny and fanaticism often took a different shape. The best known incident of his life at that time relates to the Calas family. It was a Protestant family, living at Toulouse in the south of France. One of the young men of the family, Marc Antony Calas, was one day found hanging dead from a beam in the ceiling. He had committed suicide. But the fanatical mob at once accused his father of having murdered him to prevent his becoming a Catholic. The whole family was arrested; and the old man was quickly sentenced to death, and executed with the utmost cruelty, while the family property was confiscated to the State, and the daughters put in a convent. The rest took refuge in the Protestant city of Geneva.

When Voltaire heard of the case, he first thought, like the whole of France, that old Calas was guilty. The idea that a full bench of judges (there was no jury then in France) had caused an innocent man to be put to death, found no lodgment in his mind. But after he had heard the true story from the lips of young Donald Calas, he determined to spare no effort to have the iniquitous judgment reversed. He set to work at once, placing his large fortune at the disposal of the unfortunate family, engaging lawyers, preparing briefs for them, writing to men of power or influence, stirring public opinion by the publication of pamphlets and broadsides of all forms and descriptions,— such, for instance, as his 'Treatise on Toleration,' the most important of his writings on that subject. This campaign of his lasted no less than two years; during which, he said, he never smiled once without blaming himself for it. But success at last rewarded his efforts. Public indignation rose to such a height that the government of Louis XV. had to compel the Toulouse judges to reopen the case; with the result that Calas's memory was fully exonerated, and his family indemnified for the tortures it had undergone.

In other cases — those of Sieven, of La Barre, of Count de Lally-Tollendal, of Count de Morangier, of the serf peasantry of the Abbey of Saint Claude in the Jura mountains —Voltaire displayed the same energy on behalf of the victims of tyranny, not always but often with the same success. Moreover, he never allowed the public to rest. His short writings, most of them dealing with this great question of human liberty, are numbered during that period by the hundred. It must be added that in his struggle against fanaticism he was often carried too far; and that a great many of the pamphlets he at that time issued under assumed names, assail with unpardonable scurrility all the creeds in which he did not believe. His attacks against the Bible, and most of the dogmas of the Christian faith, nearly all belong to these years. Of Jesus himself he always spoke with sympathy and veneration.

But the people saw in him simply the great antagonist of tyrannical government and unequal privileges. They wanted to be allowed to pay him honor. They wanted him in Paris. The government of Louis XVI. had to allow him to visit the capital. He left Ferney on February 6th, 1778, reaching Paris on the 10th of the same month. His arrival in the city took all the proportions of a triumph. Wherever he went — in the streets, in the theatres, at the opera, at the Academy — he was the recipient of the most enthusiastic ovations. Everybody called on him. Benjamin Franklin brought to him his grandson, asking for the boy the old man's blessing: «God and Liberty,» Voltaire said, in placing his hand over the head of the great American's grandson.

All this was too much excitement for a man who was over eighty-three years old. It finally told on him. He had to take to his bed; and he died on the 30th of May, not quite four months after leaving Ferney.

As a writer, it is somewhat difficult to-day to assign to Voltaire his exact rank. He was primarily a man of action. He wrote with a purpose. He wished to effect a transformation of the public mind; and the high value of what he wrote, its adaptation to the end he had in view, is shown by the results which were achieved by him. His greatest gifts were clearness of statement and vividness of illustration. His many-sidedness has never been surpassed. It must be recognized, however, that he succeeded in prose work better than in verse.

His complete works are perhaps more bulky than those of any other writer. This is what made him say, «A man does not ride to immortality with a load of one hundred volumes.» Some of the editions of his works indeed number as many as ninety-two volumes. The most authoritative ones, though,—those of Kehl (1784–89), of Benchot (Paris: 1829–1839), and Moland (Paris: 1875–1884),—number respectively seventy-two, seventy-two, and fifty-two volumes.

Poetry fills many of these. There are first his dramatic works: about twenty tragedies and a dozen comedies. Strange to say, witty as he was, he never wrote an entertaining comedy. But he was highly gifted in tragedy. In ‹Brutus,› in ‹Zaïre,› in ‹Alzire,› in ‹Mahomet,› in ‹Mérope,› in ‹Tancrède,› are to be found pathetic scenes which justify the great applause with which they were received. Voltaire, however, cannot be considered one of the great dramatists of the world. He lacked power of concentration; he lacked the art of forgetting himself and living out, in his mind, the life of his characters: so that his dramas always present to us something artificial. And besides, he did not dare to free himself from the tyranny of the rules of classical tragedy as they had been stated in the preceding century.

His epic poem, the ‹Henriade,› is a fine piece of narrative, but on the whole somewhat cold. Still, for fully a hundred years it was considered in France a great epic. Every educated Frenchman could recite from memory hundreds of its lines. The people were carried away by the generous sentiments of the work, which appealed a good deal less to posterity after the victory for which Voltaire had fought had been finally secured by the triumph of the French Revolution.

In light verse Voltaire excelled, and his philosophical poems also deserve high esteem. Among the latter must be especially mentioned the ‹Discourses upon Man›; the ‹Poem on the Disaster at Lisbon,› on the occasion of an earthquake which destroyed thousands of lives; and the ‹Poem on Natural Law,› a eulogy on Natural Religion.

Once at least, unhappily, Voltaire put his powers of verse composition to a use wholly unworthy of his genius, and even disgraceful. This was in his poem on Joan of Arc,—a scurrilous and decidedly dull production, in which, in trying to ridicule the idea that the pseudo-mystics of his time entertained of the heroic Maid of Orléans, he allowed himself to befoul even the chaste heroine of patriotism herself.

His chief glory as a writer, though, rests upon his prose works, of which this first must be said: that every line in them may be quoted as a model of perfect, clear, lucid, quick French style. His clearness of thought, and, thanks to his knowledge of the exact value of words, his precision of statement, cannot be surpassed.

In historical writing, his three master works—the ‹History of Charles XII., King of Sweden,› ‹The Age of Louis XIV.,› and the ‹Essay on Manners›—effected a revolution. They taught readers that other things were worth knowing of our ancestors' lives besides wars, battles, sieges, diplomatic negotiations, and feuds of royalty. He called their attention to the lives of the common people, and to the philosophical meaning of historical events. He thus made history a vehicle of his ideas relating to the improvement in the condition of mankind.

He did the same thing in his tales, which are delightful reading when they are not too licentious, as is sometimes the case. Of course ‹Candide› is no fit reading, except for people whose taste and morals have been strengthened against the danger of corruption. Others, like ‹Zadig,› ‹Micromégas,› ‹The Man with Forty Coins,› ‹Jeannot and Colin,› are little gems that are unsurpassed in their kind.

For his views of philosophy and sociology the reader must turn to the ‹Philosophical Letters› and the ‹Philosophical Dictionary.› There, as well as in hundreds of shorter productions, which are collected in his works under the comprehensive title of ‹Miscellanies,› the real Voltaire appears, more than anywhere else. There we discover the weapons which he so effectively used for the performance of his life work. A great deal of what is found in these collections would no doubt, in an age like ours, have appeared in daily, weekly, or monthly periodicals. But there was no free press, or any press at all deserving of the name, in France in the eighteenth century. There was—Voltaire knew it by his own experience—no freedom of utterance, under penalty of imprisonment in the Bastille. This is why most of these works, whatever their size, were published under assumed names and as separate publications. Combined with

Voltaire's masterly strategy in the Calas and other similar affairs; and with what we know of his wonderful eloquence in conversation, they show that under another system of government Voltaire would have been wonderful as a journalist, parliamentary orator, and political leader. But he might not have achieved such great results for mankind as he did, having to fight for freedom when freedom was not yet in existence.

No one who wishes to know Voltaire should fail to acquaint himself with his correspondence. As a letter-writer he is unsurpassed, and his correspondence covers a period of over sixty years, of the most interesting in the history of mankind. We possess over ten thousand letters, written either by or to him; and this represents, very likely, only a small part of the epistolary activity of this extraordinary man.

Adolphe Cohn

THE IRREPRESSIBLE KING

From the ‘History of Charles XII., King of Sweden’

To complete the misfortunes of Sweden, her King persisted in remaining at Demotica, and still lived on the hope of aid from Turkey which he was never to receive.

Ibrahim-Molla, the haughty vizier who decreed the war against the Muscovites, against the wish of the sultan's favorite, was suffocated between two doors. The place of vizier had become so dangerous that no one dared fill it; it remained vacant for six months: at last the favorite, Ali Coumourgi, took the title. Then all the hopes of the King of Sweden were dashed: he knew Coumourgi the better because that schemer had served him when their interests accorded with his own.

He had been eleven months at Demotica, buried in idleness and neglect; this extreme inertia, following the most violent exertions, had at last given him the malady that he feigned. All Europe believed him dead; the council of regency at Stockholm heard no news of him. The senate came in a body to entreat his sister, Princess Ulrica Eleonora, to assume the regency during his prolonged absence. She accepted it; but when she saw that the senate would constrain her to make peace with the Czar Peter the Great, and with the King of Denmark, who were attacking Sweden on all sides, she, rightly thinking that her brother would never consent, resigned her office, and sent to Turkey a detailed account of the affair.

The King received the packet from his sister at Demotica. His inborn spirit of despotism made him forget that formerly Sweden had been free, and that the senate had governed the realm conjointly with the kings. He regarded this body as a troop of servants who aspired to rule the house in their master's absence; and wrote them that if they pretended to govern, he would send them one of his boots to convey his orders!

To forestall therefore these supposed attempts to defy his authority in Sweden, and to defend his country,—as he hoped nothing further from the Ottoman Porte, and could count only on himself,—he informed the grand vizier that he wished to depart, and to return home by way of Germany.

M. Désaleurs, the French ambassador, who had taken the affairs of Sweden in hand, made the request in his own person. «Very good,» said the vizier to Count Désaleurs: «did I not rightly say that before the year was out, the King of Sweden would ask leave to depart? Tell him to go or stay, as he chooses; but let him come to a decision, and fix the day of his departure, lest he plunge us a second time into the embarrassment he caused us at Bender.»

Count Désaleurs softened this harsh message to the King. The day was set; but Charles wished, before leaving Turkey, to display the pomp of a great king, although he lived in the squalor of a fugitive. He gave to Grothusen the title of ambassador extraordinary, and sent him to take leave in due form at Constantinople, followed by eighty persons all superbly attired.

The secret springs which he touched to obtain the money for this outlay were more humiliating than the embassy was magnificent. Count Désaleurs lent the King forty thousand pieces; Grothusen had agents in Constantinople, who borrowed of a Jew at fifty per cent. interest a thousand pieces, a hundred thousand pieces of an English merchant, a thousand francs of a Turk.

Thus were brought together the means of playing before the divan the brilliant comedy of the Swedish embassy. Grothusen received all the honors that the Porte is wont to show ambassadors extraordinary on their day of audience. The purpose of all this performance was to obtain money from the grand vizier; but that minister was inexorable.

Grothusen proposed to borrow a million from the Porte: the vizier answered dryly that his master knew how to give when he pleased, and that it was beneath his dignity to lend; that the King would be abundantly furnished with whatever was necessary for his journey, in a manner worthy of the giver; perhaps the Porte would even make him some present in uncoined gold, but he must not count upon it.

At last, on the 1st of October, 1714, the King of Sweden started on his journey: a grand chamberlain with six Turkish officers came to escort him from the castle of Demirtash, where he had passed several days; he was presented in the name of the Sultan with a large tent of scarlet embroidered in gold, a sabre with precious stones set in the hilt, and eight perfect Arab steeds, with superb saddles and spurs of massive silver. Let history condescend to observe that the Arab groom in charge related their genealogy to the King: this is a long-established custom with these people, who seem to pay far more attention to the high breeding of horses than of men; and perhaps not altogether without reason, since animals that receive care and are without mixture never degenerate

Sixty chariots filled with all sorts of provisions, and three hundred horses, formed the procession. The Turks, to show greater regard for their guest, made him advance by brief stages; but this respectful rate of speed exasperated the King. He rose during the journey at three o'clock in the morning, according to his custom; as soon as he was dressed he himself awoke the chamberlain and the officers, and ordered the march resumed in complete darkness. Turkish conventionality was disturbed by this new way of traveling; but the King enjoyed the discomfort of the Turks, and said that he was avenging in a measure the affair of Bender.

Arrived on the borders of Germany, the King of Sweden learned that the Emperor had ordered him to be received with suitable magnificence in all lands under his authority; the towns and villages where the sergeants had marked out his route in advance made preparations to receive him. All these people looked forward with impatience to seeing the extraordinary man whose victories and misfortunes, whose least actions and very repose, had made such a stir in Europe and in Asia. But Charles had no wish to wade through all this pomp, nor to furnish a spectacle as the prisoner of Bender; he had even determined never to re-enter Stockholm without bringing better fortunes. "I have left," he remarked to his intimates, "my dressing-gown and slippers at Stockholm; I wish to buy no others till I return there."

When he reached Tergowitz on the Transylvanian frontier, after bidding farewell to his Turkish escort he assembled his suite in a barn; and told them all to take no trouble for his person, but to make their way to Stralsund in Pomerania, on the Baltic Sea, about three hundred leagues from the place where they were.

He took with him only Düring, and gayly left all his suite plunged in astonishment, terror, and sadness. He used a black perruque for a disguise, as he always wore his own hair, put on a hat embroidered with gold, a rough gray coat and a blue cloak, took the name of a German officer, and made a rapid journey on horseback with his traveling companion.

He avoided in his route as far as possible the soil of his enemies, open and secret, going by way of Hungary, Moravia, Austria, Bavaria, Würtemberg, the Palatinate, Westphalia, and Mecklenburg; thus making almost the circuit of Germany, and prolonging his journey by half. At the end of the first day, having galloped without respite, young Düring, who, unlike the King of Sweden, was not inured to such excessive fatigue, fainted in dismounting. The King, unwilling to waste a moment on the road, asked Düring, when he came to his senses, how much money he had. Düring replying that he had about a thousand pieces in gold, the King said, "Give me half: I see clearly that you are in no state to follow me, and that I must finish the journey alone." Düring besought him to condescend to take at least three hours' rest, assuring him that he himself could then mount again and follow his Majesty. The faithful fellow entreated him to think of the risk he must run; but the King, inexorable, made him hand over the five hundred pieces, and demanded his horses. Then the terrified Düring devised an innocent stratagem: he drew aside the master of the stables, and indicating the King of Sweden, "That man," said he, "is my cousin; we are traveling together on the same business: he sees that I am ill, and will not wait for me three hours; give him, I pray you, the worst horse in your stable, and find me some chaise or post-carriage."

He put two ducats into the master's hand, and all his requests were fulfilled to the letter. A lame and balky horse was given to the King. Thus mounted, he set off alone, at ten o'clock at night, in utter darkness, with wind, snow, and rain beating on him. Düring, having slept several hours, began the journey in a carriage drawn by vigorous horses. At the end of a few miles he overtook the King traveling on foot to the next post, his steed having refused to move further.

He was forced to take a seat in Düring's carriage, where he slept on the straw. Afterwards they continued their journey, racing their horses by day, and sleeping on a cart at night, without stopping anywhere.

After sixteen days of rapid travel, not without danger of arrest more than once, they at last arrived at the gates of the town of Stralsund, an hour after midnight.

The King called to the sentinel that he was a courier dispatched from Turkey by the King of Sweden; and that he must speak at once with General Düker, the governor of the place. The sentinel replied that it was late; the governor had retired, and he must wait till daybreak.

The King rejoined that he came on important business, and declared that if they did not wake Düker without delay, they would all be punished next morning. The sergeant finally woke the governor. Düker thought that one of the King's generals might have arrived: the gates were thrown open, the courier was brought to his room.

Düker, half asleep, asked him for news of the King. Charles, taking him by the arm, replied, «Well, well, Düker, have my most faithful subjects forgotten me?» The general recognized him: he could not believe his eyes; he threw himself from the bed, embracing the knees of his master, and shedding tears of joy. Instantly the news spread through the town: everybody got up; the governor's house was surrounded with soldiers, the streets filled with residents asking each other, «Is the King really here?» Windows were illuminated; wine ran in the streets by the light of a thousand torches; there was an incessant noise of artillery.

Meanwhile the King was conducted to his room. For sixteen days he had not slept in a bed; his legs were so badly swollen from extreme fatigue that his boots had to be cut off. He had neither underwear nor overgarments; a wardrobe was improvised from the most suitable materials the town afforded. After a few hours' sleep he rose, only to review his troops, and visit the fortifications. The same day he sent orders everywhere to renew more hotly than ever the war against all his enemies.

WAR

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

All animals wage perpetual war; every species is born to devour another. Not one, not even sheep or doves, that does not swallow a prodigious number of invisible creatures. Males make war for the females, like Menelaus and Paris. Air, earth, water, are fields of carnage. God having given reason to men, this reason might teach them not to emulate the brutes, particularly when nature has provided them neither with arms to kill their fellows nor with a desire for their blood.

Yet murderous war is so much the dreadful lot of man, that with two or three exceptions, all ancient histories represent them full-armed against one another. Among the Canadian Indians *man* and *warrior* are synonymous; and we have seen in our hemisphere, that thief and soldier are the same thing. Manichæans! behold your excuse! From the little that he may have seen in army hospitals, or in the few villages memorable for some glorious victory, its warmest apologist will admit that war always brings pestilence and famine in its train.

Truly, that is a noble art which desolates countries, destroys habitations, and causes the death of from forty to a hundred thousand men a year! In historic times this invention was first cultivated by nations who convened assemblies for their common good. For instance, the Diet of the Greeks declared to the Diet of Phrygia and neighboring nations their intention to depart on a thousand fishers' barks, for the extermination of these rivals. The assembled Roman people thought it to their interest to destroy the people of Veii or the Volscians. And afterwards, all the Romans, becoming exasperated against all the Carthaginians, fought them interminably on land and sea.

It is a little different at present. A genealogist proves to a prince that he descends in a right line from a count whose parents three or four hundred years ago made a family compact with a house the recollection of which, even, is lost. This house had distant pretensions to a province whose last ruler died suddenly. Both the prince and his council at once perceive his legal right. In vain does this province, hundreds of leagues distant, protest that it knows him not, and has no desire to know him; that to govern it he must at least have its consent;—these objections reach only as far as the ears of this ruler by divine right. He assembles a host of needy adventurers, dresses them in coarse blue cloth, borders their hats with a broad white binding, instructs them how to wheel to the right and to the left, and marches them to glory. Other princes hearing of this adventure come to take part in it, each according to his power, and cover the country with more mercenary murderers than Zenghis Khan, Tamerlane, or Bajazet employed in their train. People at a distance hear that fighting is going on, and that by joining the ranks they may earn five or six sous a day. They divide themselves into bands, like reapers, and offer their services to whoever will hire them. These hordes fall upon one another, not only without having the least interest in the affray, but without knowing the reason of it. There appear, therefore, five or six belligerent powers, sometimes three against three, sometimes two against four, and sometimes one against five,—all equally detesting one another,—supporting and attacking by turns; all agreed in a single point only, that of doing as much harm as possible.

The most amazing part of this infernal enterprise is that each murderous chief causes his colors to be blessed, and solemnly invokes God, before he goes to exterminate his neighbors! If it is his luck to kill only two or three thousand men, he does not return thanks for it; but when he has destroyed say ten thousand by fire and sword, and to make a good job leveled some town with the ground, then they sing a hosanna in four parts, composed in a language unknown to the fighters, and full of barbarity. The same pæan serves for marriages and births, as well as for murders; which is unpardonable, particularly in a nation famous for song-writing. Natural religion has a thousand times prevented men from committing crime. A well-trained mind is not inclined to brutality; a tender mind is appalled by it, remembering that God is just. But conventional religion encourages whatever cruelties are practiced in droves,—conspiracies, seditions, pillages, ambuscades, surprisals of towns, robberies, and murder. Men march gayly to crime, each under the banner of his saint.

A certain number of dishonest apologists is everywhere paid to celebrate these murderous deeds: some are dressed in a long black close coat, with a short cloak; others have a shirt above a gown; some wear two variegated streamers over their shirts. All of them talk a long time, and quote what was done of old in Palestine, as applicable to a combat in Veteravia. The rest of the year these people declaim against vice. They prove in three arguments and by antitheses that ladies who lay a little carmine on their cheeks will be the eternal objects of eternal vengeance; that ‘Polyeucte’ and ‘Athalie’ are works of the evil one; that a man who for two hundred crowns a day furnishes his table with fresh sea-fish during Lent, works out his salvation; and that a poor man who eats two and a half sous' worth of mutton will go to perdition. Miserable physicians of souls! You exclaim for five quarters of an hour on some prick of a pin, and say nothing on the malady which tears us into a thousand pieces! Philosophers, moralists! burn all your books, while the caprices of a few men force that part of mankind consecrated to heroism, to murder without question millions of our brethren! Can there be anything more horrible in all nature? What becomes of, what signifies to me, humanity, beneficence, modesty, temperance, mildness, wisdom, and piety, whilst half a pound of lead, sent from the distance of a hundred steps, pierces my body, and I die at twenty years of age in inexpressible torments, in the midst of five or six thousand dying men; whilst my eyes, opening for the last time, see the town in which I was born destroyed by fire and sword, and the last sounds which reach my ears are the cries of women and children dying beneath the ruins, all for the pretended interests of a man whom I never knew?

APPEARANCES

From the ‘Philosophical Dictionary’

ARE all appearances deceitful? Have our senses been given us only to delude us? Is everything error? Do we live in a dream, surrounded by shadowy chimeras? We see the sun setting, when he is already below the horizon; before he has yet risen, we see him appear. A square tower seems to be round. A straight stick, thrust into the water, seems to be bent.

You see your face in a mirror, and the image appears to be behind the glass; it is, however, neither behind nor before it. This glass, to the sight and touch so smooth and even, is in fact an unequal congregation of projections and cavities. The finest and fairest skin is a kind of bristled network, the openings of which are incomparably larger than the threads, and inclose an infinite number of minute hairs. Under this network, fluids incessantly pass, and from it there issue continual exhalations which cover the whole surface.

What we call large is to an elephant very small; and what we call small is to insects a world. The motion which a snail finds swift would be slow in the eye of an eagle. This rock, which is impenetrable by steel, is a sieve consisting of more pores than matter, and containing a thousand avenues leading to its centre, in which are lodged multitudes of animals, which may, for aught we know, think themselves the masters of the universe.

Nothing is either as it appears to be, or in the place where we believe it to be.

Some philosophers, tired of the constant deceptions of bodies, have in their spleen pronounced that bodies do not exist, and that nothing is real but mind. As well might they conclude that, appearances being false, and the nature of the soul being as little known as that of matter, there is no reality in either body or soul.

Perhaps it is this despair of knowing anything which has led some Chinese philosophers to declare Nothing the beginning and the end of all things.

This destructive philosophy was well known in Molière's time. Doctor Macphurius represents the school: when teaching Sganarelle, he says, "You must not say, 'I am come,' but 'It seems to me that I am come;' for it may seem so to you, without being really the case."

But at the present day, a comic scene is not an argument (though it is sometimes better than an argument), and there is often as much pleasure in seeking after truth as in laughing at philosophy.

You do not see the network, the cavities, the threads, the inequalities, the exhalations, of that white and delicate skin which you admire. Animals a thousand times less than a mite discern these objects which escape your vision; they lodge, feed, and travel about in them, as in an extensive country, and those on the right arm are entirely ignorant that creatures of their own species live on the left. Were you so unfortunate as to see what they see, this charming skin would strike you with horror.

The harmony of a concert which delights you must have on certain classes of minute animals the effect of terrible thunder; and perhaps it kills them. We see, touch, hear, feel things, only in the way in which they ought to be seen, touched, heard, or felt, by ourselves.

All is in due proportion. The laws of optics, which show you an object in the water where it is not, and break a right line, are in entire accordance with those which make the sun appear to you with a diameter of two feet, although he is a million times larger than the earth. To see him in his true dimensions would require an eye capable of collecting his rays at an angle as great as his disk, which is impossible. Our senses, then, assist much more than they deceive us.

Motion, time, hardness, softness, dimensions, distance, approximation, strength, weakness, appearances of whatever kind,—all is relative. And who has created these relations?

ON THE CONTRADICTIONS OF THIS WORLD

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

The more one knows this world of ours, the more contradictions and inconsistencies he finds. To begin with the Grand Turk: he is under an indispensable necessity to cut off the head of whoever displeases him, and he can at the same time hardly preserve his own.

If from the Grand Turk we pass to St. Peter, his Holiness confirms the election of emperors, he has kings for his vassals, but has no more power than a Duke of Savoy. He sends his commands into America and the East Indies; yet can he not take away one privilege from the republic of Lucca. The Emperor is King of the Romans; but his whole right and prerogative consists in holding the Pope's stirrup, and the basin for him to dip his hands at mass.

The English serve their monarch on the knee; but then they depose him, imprison him, behead him.

Men who are vowed to poverty, obtain, by the very virtue of that vow, an estate of two hundred thousand crowns yearly revenue; and by means of their humility, become absolute sovereigns.

At Rome they rigorously condemn pluralities of benefices, while at the same instant they will issue bulls to enable some German to hold half a dozen bishoprics at once. It is, say they, because the German bishops have no church cures. The chancellor of France is the second person in the State, and yet he is never permitted to eat at the king's table; at least it has never happened hitherto: while a colonel, who is scarce a gentleman, enjoys that honor. An intendant's lady is a queen in her husband's province, and at court no more than a simple country madam.

Men convicted of the heinous sin of nonconformity are publicly burnt: whilst the second Eclogue of Virgil, in which is that warm declaration of love which Corydon makes the beauteous Alexis, "Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin," is gravely expounded in every college; and pupils are asked to note that though Corydon was fair and Amyntas swarthy, yet still Amyntas had the preference.

Should a poor, harmless philosopher, who never dreamed of doing the least harm to any one, take it into his head that the earth moves, that light comes from the sun, that matter might have other properties than those we are acquainted with, immediately the hue and cry is raised against him; he is an impious disturber of the public peace: though his persecutors have translated and published, *in usum Delphini*, Lucretius, and Cicero's 'Tusculan Questions,' which are two complete bodies of irreligion.

Our courts of justice have rejected the belief in evil spirits, and witches are subjects of laughter: but Gaufredy and Grandier were both burnt for witchcraft; and lately, by a majority of voices, a monk was condemned to the stake by one of our Parliaments for having bewitched a young damsel of eighteen years by breathing upon her.

The skeptical philosophy of Bayle was persecuted even in Holland. La Motte le Vayer, a still greater skeptic, though not near so good a philosopher, was preceptor to Louis XIV. and his brother. Gourville was hanged in effigy at Paris, whilst he was the ambassador of France in Germany.

The famous atheist Spinoza lived and died in peace. Vanini, whose only crime was writing against Aristotle, was burnt for an atheist; in this character he has the honor to fill a considerable space in the history of the republic of letters, as well as in all the dictionaries,— those enormous archives of lies, with a small mixture of truth. Do but open those books, you will find it recorded that Vanini not only taught atheism in his writings, but also that twelve professors of the same creed had actually set out from Naples to make proselytes for their gospel. Then open Vanini's books, and you will be astonished to find that they contain so many proofs of the existence of a Deity. See here what he says in his 'Amphitheatrum,' a work condemned upon hearsay because it is wholly unknown:—"God is his own sole principle and boundary, without end, without beginning, having no need of either; and the father of all beginning and of every end: he exists forever, but in no space of time; there is no duration, *a parte ante*,—that is to say, which is past,—nor futurity, which will come hereafter: he is present everywhere, without occupying any place; immovable, yet without stopping, and rapid without motion: he is all, but without inclusion of all; he is in everything, but without being excluded from other beings; good without quality; and whilst he produces all the various changes in nature, he is himself unvaried and immutable: his will is his power; he is simplicity itself: there is no such thing as mere possibility; all in him is real: he is the first, the middle, and the last act; in one word, he is all: yet he is above all kings, without them, within them, beyond them, eternally before them, yet present with them." After such a confession of his faith was Vanini denounced as an atheist! On what grounds? The simple deposition of a fellow called Francon. In vain did his works bear witness for him. A single enemy robbed him at one stroke of life and reputation.

The little book called the 'Cymballum Mundi'—a cold imitation of Lucian, without the slightest, the most distant relation to Christianity—has in like manner been condemned to the flames: yet Rabelais has been printed *cum privilegio*, and the 'Turkish Spy' and even the 'Persian Letters' suffered to pass unmolested,—particularly the latter, that ingenious, diverting, and daring performance which contains an entire letter in defense of suicide; another in which are the words, "If we suppose such a thing as religion"; another where it is said in express terms, that the bishops have properly no other function but that of dispensing with the laws; another which calls the Pope a magician who endeavors to persuade us that three and one are the same, and that the bread we eat is not bread. The Abbé de St. Pierre, a man possibly deceived but ever upright, and whose works Cardinal Du Bois used to call the "Dreams of a Good Citizen,"—this Abbé de St. Pierre, I say, was excluded from the French Academy, *nemine contradicente*, for having in a political work advocated boards of council in place of secretaries of State, and for saying that the finances had been shamefully managed towards the close of that glorious reign. The author of the 'Persian Letters' made mention of Louis XIV. only to tell the world that the King was a magician who undertook to persuade his subjects that paper was gold and silver; who preferred the Turkish to all other forms of government; who held a man that handed him a napkin in higher esteem than one who had won him battles; who had given a pension to a runaway who had fled a matter of two leagues from the field of battle without once looking behind him, and a considerable position to another who had run four leagues; who was miserably poor, although his finances are inexhaustible. What did this same author say of Louis XIV., the protector of the French Academy? for on the reputation of this book he was admitted into their number. We may add to this, what crowns the inconsistency, that this body received him amongst them chiefly for having made them ridiculous; for of all the books in which authors have laughed at their company, in none are they worse handled than in the 'Persian Letters.' Listen: «The members who compose this body have nothing to do but to prate everlastingly; panegyric flows naturally out of that babbling of theirs, which is truly world without end,» etc. After being treated in this manner, they praised him for his skill in drawing a strong likeness.

Were I disposed to treat the contrarieties of the republic of letters, I must write the history of all the literati, and of all the wits who have ever existed. Or had I a mind to consider the inconsistencies of society, I must write a history of the human race. An Asiatic traveling in Europe might take us all for pagans. The very days of our week pay tribute to Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus; the marriage of Cupid and Psyche is painted in a palace belonging to the Pope! If this Asiatic attended our opera, he could not doubt that it was a festival in honor of the heathen gods. Were he to study our manners, he would be still more astonished. Spain excludes all foreigners from the smallest commerce, directly or indirectly, with her American settlements, whilst those very Americans carry on, through Spanish factors, a trade to the amount of fifty millions per annum; so that Spain could never grow rich were it not for the violation of that law, which still stands though perpetually trampled upon. Another government encourages an India company, while its theologians declare its dividends criminal before

God. Our Asiatic would behold the seats of judges, the command of armies, the places of counselors of State, bought with money: nor could he comprehend the assertion of the patents entitling them to hold these places, that these have been granted without caballing, fee, or reward, and purely on the score of merit, whilst the valuable consideration given is plainly disclosed in their letters of provision! What would he think to see our players at the same instant paid by the sovereign and excommunicated by the clergy? Suppose he were to ask why a lieutenant-general—who is only a *roturier*, a man of the common class, though he may have won battles—should, in the estimation of the court, be ranked with a peasant, whilst an *echevin* or city sheriff is held as noble as the Montmorencies? Why, when all regular shows are prohibited in the week consecrated to edification, should mountebanks be tolerated whose language is offensive to the least delicate ear? In short, he would see our laws in direct opposition to our customs. Yet were we to travel into Asia, we should come upon like inconsistencies.

Men are everywhere fools: they make laws much as we repair breaches in walls. In one place the elder brothers contrive to leave the younger mere beggars; in others they share alike. At one time the Church authorizes duels, at another she anathematizes them. The partisans and enemies of Aristotle have been excommunicated each in turn; as have the wearers of long hair or short hair. In the known world no law has been discovered able to redress a very silly piece of folly, which is gaming. The laws of play are the only ones which admit of neither exception, relaxation, imposition, nor variation. An ex-lackey, if he plays at *lansquenet* with a king, and happens to win, is paid without the least hesitation; in every other respect the law is a sword, with which the stronger cuts the weaker in pieces.

Yet the world gets on as if it were constituted in the wisest manner imaginable! Irregularity is a part of ourselves. Our political world is much like our globe: though ugly enough, it manages to get on. It would be folly to wish that all the mountains, seas, and rivers were drawn in regular geometrical figures: it would be a still greater folly to expect consummate wisdom from men; as if one should suggest giving wings to dogs, or horns to eagles. Indeed, these pretended oppositions that we call contradictions are necessary ingredients in the composition of man; who like the rest of nature is what he has to be.

ON READING

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

THERE is this good in a large library, that it frightens the beholder! Two hundred thousand volumes are enough to discourage a man tempted to print a book. But unfortunately he very soon says to himself, « Most of those books are not read, and perhaps mine will be!» He compares himself to the drop of water that complained of being confounded and lost in the ocean; a génie took pity on it, and made an oyster swallow it. It became one of the finest pearls in the ocean, and in time the chief ornament of the great Mogul's throne. Those who are mere compilers, imitators, commentators, pickers of phrases, critics by the week,—in short, those on whom no génie will take pity,—will forever remain the drop of water.

Our man, then, is working in his garret in hopes of becoming the pearl.

It is true that in that immense collection of books there are about one hundred and ninety-nine thousand that will never be read, at least never read through; but one may need to consult some of them once in his life. And it is a great advantage to the seeker to find without delay, under his hand, in the palace of kings, the volume and the page he is looking for. The library is one of the noblest of institutions. There has never been an expense more magnificent and more useful.

The public library of the French king is the finest in the world; less indeed as to number and rarity of volumes, than in the facility and politeness with which the librarians lend them to all the learned. That collection is unquestionably the most precious monument there is in France.

Let not that astonishing multitude of books daunt the student. Paris contains seven hundred thousand people; one cannot live with them all, and must make choice of three or four friends,—and we ought not to complain more of a superfluity of books than of men.

A man who wishes to know something of his own being, and who has no time to lose, is much puzzled. He feels that he ought at once to read Hobbes and Spinoza; Bayle, who has written against them; Leibnitz, who has opposed Bayle; Clarke, who has disputed the theories of Leibnitz; Malebranche, who differs with all of them; Locke, who is supposed to have confounded Malebranche; Stillingfleet, who thinks he has vanquished Locke; Cudworth, who sets himself up above all because no one can understand him! One would die of old age before he could go through a hundredth part of the metaphysical romance!

THE IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

Who art thou? Whence art thou? What is thy business here? What will become of thee?—These are questions which confront us all, but which not a man of us can answer. I ask the plants what power occasions their growth; and how the same soil produces fruits so different. Insensible and mute, these leave me to my ignorance. I interrogate that crowd of animals endowed with motion, able to communicate, who enjoy my very sensations; who possess some ideas, some memory, all the passions. They know even less than I what they are, why they are, what they shall be. I am a weak animal: I come into the world without knowledge, strength, or instinct. I cannot even crawl to my mother's breast, as can other animals. I acquire a few ideas, as I acquire a little strength, when my organs begin to develop. This strength increases to a certain degree, and then daily decreases. So the power of conceiving ideas increases to a certain degree, and then insensibly disappears. What is the nature of that crescent force? I know not; and those who have spent their lives in search of this unsearchable cause know no more than I. What is that other power which creates images in my brain? which preserves them in my memory? Those who spend their lives in seeking for this knowledge have sought it in vain. We are as ignorant of first principles as we were in our cradles. Have I learned anything from the books of the past two thousand years? Sometimes a desire arises in us to understand in what manner we think. I have interrogated my reason, imploring it to explain. The question confounds it. I have tried to discover if the same springs of action which enable me to digest or to walk are those whereby I develop ideas. I cannot conceive how or wherefore these ideas flee, when hunger makes my body languish, and how they spring up again when I have eaten I have observed so great a difference in my thinking when I am well fed or ill fed, that I have believed there was a substance in me which reasoned, and another substance which digested. But on endeavoring to prove to myself that we are two, I have been sure that I am only one; and the contradiction confuses me.

I have asked some of my fellow-creatures who with great industry cultivate the earth, our common source of life, if they felt themselves to be double beings; if they had discovered in their philosophy that they possessed an immortal substance that was yet formed of nothing, existed without extent, acted on their nerves without touching them, and actually preceded their creation. They thought I was laughing at them, and went about their business with not so much as a reply. Seeing then that an immense number of men had not the least idea of the difficulties that distressed me, nor perplexed themselves with what was said in the schools,—of Being in the abstract, of matter and spirit, etc.,—observing too that they often diverted themselves with my eagerness to learn, I suspected it to be unnecessary that we should know these things. I concluded that nature gives to every being what is proper for him; and I came to think that those things which we could not obtain were not designed for us. Notwithstanding this depressing conclusion, however, I cannot suppress the desire of being instructed; and my disappointed curiosity is ever insatiable. . . .

We must renounce common-sense, or else concede that we know nothing save by experience; and certainly if it be by experience alone—by a series of trials and through long reflection—that we acquire some feeble and slight ideas of body, of space, of time, of infinity, even of God, it is not likely that the author of our nature placed these ideas in the brain of every fœtus, in order that only a small number of men should afterwards make use of them. . . .

Having no ideas, then, save by experience, it is not possible that we should ever know what matter is. We touch and we see the properties of that substance. But even the word substance, *that which is beneath*, hints to us that this thing beneath will be unknown to us forever. Whatever we discover of its appearance, this substance, this foundation, will ever elude us. For the same reason we shall never of ourselves know what spirit is. The word originally signified *breath*, and by its use we express vaguely and grossly that which inspires thinking. But if, even by a miracle,— which is not to be expected,— we should achieve some slight idea of the substance of this spirit, we should be no further advanced; and we could never imagine how this substance received sentiments and thoughts. We know that we possess a modicum of intelligence; but how do we acquire it? It is a secret of Nature which she has not divulged to any mortal. . . .

I find at this time, in this period,— which is the dawn of reason,— that some of the hydra heads of fanaticism are again springing up. Their poison however is apparently less mortal, their jaws less voracious, than of yore. Less blood is spilled for the sake of dogma than was long wasted on account of plenary indulgences sold at market. But fanaticism still lives. Every man who searches for truth incurs the danger of persecution. Are we then to remain idle in mental darkness? Or must we light a flambeau at which envy and calumny may rekindle their torches? For my own part, I would no more conceal truth in the face of these monsters than I would go without food for fear of being poisoned.

CLIMATE

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

It is certain that the sun and the atmosphere stamp themselves on all the productions of nature, from man to mushrooms. In the grand age of Louis XIV., the ingenious Fontenelle remarked:—

« It might be suggested that the torrid and the two frigid zones are not well suited to the sciences. Down to the present day, these have not traveled beyond Egypt and Mauritania on the one side, nor on the other beyond Sweden. Perhaps it is not mere chance that their range is between Mount Atlas and the Baltic Sea. But whether these are the limits appointed to them by nature, or whether we may hope to see great authors among Laplanders or negroes, is not disclosed.»

Chardin, one of the few travelers who reason and investigate, goes still further than Fontenelle, when speaking of Persia. « The temperature of warm climates,» he says, « enervates the mind as well as the body, and dissipates that fire which the imagination requires for invention. In such climates men are incapable of the long study and intense application necessary to the production of first-rate works in the liberal and mechanic arts," etc. But Chardin did not recollect that Sadi and Lokman were Persians, nor that Archimedes belonged to Sicily, where the heat is greater than in three-fourths of Persia. He forgot that Pythagoras once taught geometry to the Brahmins. The Abbé Dubos supported and developed the opinion of Chardin. A century and a half earlier, Bodin made this idea the foundation of a system in his 'Republic' and in his 'Method of History': he asserts that climate determines the principle both of the government and the religion of nations. Diodorus of Sicily held the same opinion long before Bodin. The author of the 'Spirit of Laws,' without quoting authorities, carried this idea farther than Chardin and Bodin. Certain classes believed him to have first suggested it, and imputed it to him as a crime. This was quite in character with the classes referred to. There are men everywhere who possess more zeal than understanding.

We might ask these believers in climatic influences, why the emperor Julian, in his 'Misopogon,' says that what pleased him in the Parisians was the gravity of their characters and the severity of their manners; and why these Parisians, without the slightest change of climate, are now like playful children whom the government punishes and smiles upon at the same moment, and who themselves at the next moment also smile, and sing lampoons upon their masters. Why are the Egyptians, who are described as still more grave than the Parisians, at present the most lazy, frivolous, and cowardly of peoples, after having conquered the whole world for their pleasure, under a king called Sesostris? Why are there no longer Anacreons, Aristotles, or Zeuxises, at Athens? Whence comes it that Rome, instead of its Ciceros, Catos, and Livys, breeds citizens who dare not speak their minds, and a brutalized populace whose supreme happiness consists in having oil cheap and in gazing at processions?

Cicero, in his letters, is occasionally very jocose concerning the English. He desires his brother Quintus, Cæsar's lieutenant, to inform him whether he finds any great philosophers among them in his expedition to Britain. How little he suspected that that country would one day produce mathematicians beyond his comprehension! Yet the climate has not altered, and the sky of London is as cloudy now as it was then.

Everything changes, both in bodies and minds, by time. Perhaps the Americans will in some future period cross the sea to instruct Europeans in the arts. Climate has some influence, government a hundred times more; religion and government combined, more still.

Certainly climate influences religion in respect to ceremonies and usages. A legislator could have experienced no difficulty in inducing the Indians to bathe in the Ganges at certain appearances of the moon. Bathing is a high gratification to them. Had a like purification been proposed to the people who inhabit the banks of the Dwina, near Archangel, the proposer would have been stoned. Forbid pork to an Arab, who, after eating this meat (miserable and disgusting in Arabia), would be afflicted with leprosy, he will obey you with joy; prohibit it to a Westphalian, and he will be tempted to knock you down. Abstinence from wine is a good precept of religion in Arabia, where orange, citron, and lemon waters are necessary to health. Mahomet would not have forbidden wine in Switzerland, especially before going into battle. . . .

Religions have always turned upon two pivots,— forms or ceremonies, and faith: forms and ceremonies depend much on climate; faith not at all. A doctrine will be received with equal readiness under the equator or at the pole; it will be equally rejected at Batavia and the Orcades; while it will be maintained *unguibus et rostro*— with tooth and nail— at Salamanca. This depends not on sun and atmosphere, but solely upon opinion, that fickle empress of the world. Certain libations of wine will be naturally enjoined in a country abounding in vineyards; and it would never occur to the legislative mind to institute sacred mysteries which could not be celebrated without wine, in such a country as Norway. The burning of incense is expressly commanded in a court where beasts are killed in honor of the divinity, and for the priests' supper. This slaughter-house, called a temple, would be a place of abominable infection were it not continually purified; and without the use of aromatics, the religion of the ancients would have introduced the plague. The interior was even festooned with flowers to sweeten the air. But the cow is not a sacrificial animal in the burning territory of the Indian peninsula, because, while it supplies the indispensable milk, it is very rare in arid and barren districts; and because its flesh, being dry and tough, and yielding but little nourishment, would afford the Brahmins but sorry cheer. On the other hand, the creature comes to be considered sacred, by reason of its rarity and utility. The temple of Jupiter Ammon, where the heat is excessive, will be entered only with bare feet. To perform his devotions at Copenhagen, a man requires his feet to be warm and well covered.

It is not thus with doctrine. Polytheism has been believed in all climates; and it is as easy for a Crim Tartar as for an inhabitant of Mecca to acknowledge one only incommunicable God, neither begotten nor begetting. It is by doctrine, more than by rites, that a religion extends from one climate to another. The doctrine of the unity of God passed rapidly from Medina to Mount Caucasus. Climate, then, yields to opinion. . . .

In Egypt the emblematical worship of animals succeeded to the doctrines of Thaut. The gods of the Romans afterwards shared Egypt with the dogs, the cats, and the crocodiles. To the Roman religion succeeded Christianity; that was completely banished by Mahometanism, which will perhaps be superseded by some new religion. In all these changes climate has effected nothing: government has done everything. We are here considering only second causes, without raising our unhallowed eyes to a directing Providence. The Christian religion, which received its birth in Syria, and grew up to fuller stature in Alexandria, inhabits now those countries where Tenbat and Irminsul, Freya, and Odin, were formerly adored.

There are some nations whose religion is the result of neither climate nor government. What cause detached North Germany, Denmark, most of Switzerland, Holland, England, Scotland, and Ireland, from the Roman communion? Poverty. Indulgences and deliverances from purgatory for the souls of those whose bodies had no money, were sold too dear. The prelates and monks absorbed the whole revenue of a province. People adopted a cheaper religion. In short, after numerous civil wars, it was concluded that the papal faith was good for the nobles, and the reformed faith for citizens. Time will show whether the religion of the Greeks or of the Turks will prevail on the coasts of the Euxine and Ægean Seas.

LUXURY

From the ‹Philosophical Dictionary›

In the country of the barefoot, could luxury be imputed to the first man who made himself a pair of shoes? Was he not rather a model of sense and industry? So of the man who contrived the first shirt.

As to the man who had it washed and ironed, I set him down as an absolute genius, abundant in resources, and qualified to govern a State. Naturally, however, a society unused to clean shirts looked upon him as an effeminate coxcomb, who was likely to corrupt the simplicity of the nation. . . .

The other day a Norwegian was berating a Dutchman for luxury. «Where now,» said he, «are the happy times when an Amsterdam merchant, setting out for the Indies, left a quarter of smoked beef in his kitchen, and found it untouched on his return? Where are your wooden spoons and iron forks? Is it not shameful for a sensible Dutchman to sleep in a bed of damask?»

«Go to Batavia,» replied the Amsterdammer; «bring home, as I have done, ten tons of gold: and then see if you too do not prefer to be well clothed, well fed, and well lodged.»

Since this conversation, twenty volumes have been written about luxury, which has neither increased nor diminished.

For the space of two thousand years, both in verse and prose, this pleasant vice has been attacked — and cherished. Recall the Romans. When early in their history these banditti pillaged their neighbors' harvests, when to profit their own wretched villages they burned the poor hamlets of the Volsci and Samnites, they were, we are told, disinterested and virtuous men. Naturally they did not carry away gold, silver, and jewels, because the towns which they sacked and plundered had none; nor did their woods and swamps produce partridges or pheasants: yet posterity, forsooth, extols their temperance! When they had systematically robbed every country from the Adriatic to the Euphrates, and had developed sense enough to enjoy the fruits of their rapine; when they cultivated the arts and tasted all the pleasures of life, and communicated them to the conquered nations,— then, we are told, they ceased to be wise and good!

The moral seems to be that a robber ought not to eat the dinner he has taken, nor wear the habit he has stolen, nor ornament his fingers with plundered rings: all these, it is said, should be thrown into the river, that the thief may live like the honest man. But what morality ought to say is, Never rob, it is your duty not to rob. Condemn the brigands when they plunder; but do not treat them as fools or madmen for enjoying their plunder. If English sailors win prize money for the capture of Pondicherry or Havana, can they be blamed for pleasuring in London in compensation for the hardships they have undergone in Asia or America? Certain censors admonish men to bury, as it were, the riches that come from war, or agriculture, or commerce and industry in general. They cite Lacedæmonia: why not cite the republic of San Marino? What benefits did Sparta afford Greece? Did she produce a Demosthenes, a Sophocles, an Apelles, or a Phidias? The luxury of Athens formed great men. Sparta certainly produced great captains, though fewer even of these than did other cities. But granting that a small republic like Lacedæmonia may maintain its poverty, men uniformly die, whether in poverty or comfort. The savage of Canada subsists and attains old age, not less than the English landlord with fifty thousand guineas a year. But who would ever compare the country of the Iroquois to England?

Let the republic of Ragusa and the canton of Zug enact sumptuary laws: they are quite right. The poor must not exceed their means; but I have somewhere read that, with some harm, luxury on the whole does great good.

If by luxury you mean excess, let us at once admit that excess is pernicious,—in abstinence as well as in gluttony, in parsimony as in profusion. In my own village, where the soil is meagre, the imposts heavy, and the prohibition against a man's exporting the corn he has himself sown and reaped, intolerable, there is hardly a cultivator who is not well clothed, and who has not sufficient warmth and food. Should this cultivator plow in his best clothes, and with his hair dressed and powdered, he would display the most absurd luxury; but were a rich citizen of Paris or London to appear at the play in the dress of this peasant, he would exhibit the grossest, the most ridiculous parsimony.

> «Some certain mean in all things may be found,
> To mark our virtues' and our vices' bound.»

On the invention of scissors, what was not said of those who pared their nails, and cut off the hair that was hanging down over their eyes? They were doubtless regarded as prodigals and coxcombs, buying an extravagant instrument fit only to spoil the work of the Creator. What a sin to pare the horn which God himself made to grow at our finger-ends! It was an insult to Divinity! With shirts and socks it was far worse. With what wrath and indignation did the old counselors, who had never worn socks, exclaim against the young magistrates who encouraged so fatal a luxury!

PASSAGES FROM THE PAMPHLETS

Love truth, but pardon error. The mortal who goes astray is still a man and thy brother. Be wise for thyself alone; compassionate for him. Achieve thine own welfare by blessing others.

Take revenge upon a rival by surpassing him.

To desire all is the mark of a fool. Excess is his portion. Moderation is the treasure of the wise: he knows how to control his tastes, his labors, his pleasures.

Work is often the father of pleasure. I pity the man overwhelmed with the weight of his own leisure. Happiness is a good that nature sells us.

One day some mice said to one another, «How charming is this world! What an empire is ours! This palace so superb was built for us; from all eternity God made for us these large holes. Do you see those fat hams under that dim ceiling? they were created there for us by Nature's hands; those mountains of lard, inexhaustible aliment, will be ours till the end of time. Yes, we are, great God, if our sages tell us the truth, the masterpiece, the end, the aim, of all thy works! Cats are dangerous and prompt to devour, but it is to instruct and correct us!»

Miracles are good; but to relieve a brother, to draw a friend from the depths of misery, to pardon the virtues of our enemies — these are greater miracles.

The secret of wearying your reader is to tell him everything.

The true virtue then is «beneficence»; a new word in the French language, but the whole universe ought to cherish the idea.

Souls communicate with souls, and can measure one another without need of an intermediate body. It is only the greatness or the worth of a soul that ought to frighten or intimidate us. To fear or to respect the body and its accessories — force, beauty, royalty, rank, office — is pure imbecility. Men are born equal and die equal. Let us respect the virtue, the merit of their souls, and pity the imperfections of these souls.

Doubtless we should by prudence avoid the evil which that physical force [of rulers] can do us, as we should guard ourselves against a crowned bull, an enthroned monkey, a savage dog, let loose upon us. Let us beware of such. Let us even endeavor, if possible, to moderate them, to soften them; but this sentiment is very different from the esteem and respect which we owe to souls.

Having it clearly in your heart that all men are equal, and in your head that the exterior distinguishes them, you can get on very well in the world.

Believe that in his eternal wisdom the Most High has, with his own hand, engraved at the bottom of thy heart natural religion. Believe that the native candor of thy soul will not be the object of God's eternal hate. Believe that before his throne, in all times and in all places, the heart of the just person is precious. Believe that a modest bonze, a charitable dervish, finds favor in his eyes sooner than a pitiless Jansenist or an ambitious pontiff. God judges us according to our virtues, not our sacrifices.

After all, it is right to give every possible form to our soul. It is a flame that God has intrusted to us: we are bound to feed it with all that we find most precious. We should introduce into our existence all imaginable modes, and open every door of the soul to all sorts of knowledge and all sorts of feelings: so long as it does not all go in pell-mell, there is plenty of room for everything.

One who has many witnesses of his death can die with courage.

I envy the beasts two things,—their ignorance of evil to come, and their ignorance of what is said about them.

Does not experience prove that influence over men's minds is gained only by offering them the difficult, nay, the impossible, to perform or believe? Offer only things that are reasonable, and all the world will answer, "We knew as much as that." But enjoin things that are hard, impracticable; paint the Deity as ever armed with the thunder; make blood run before the altars: and you will win the multitude's ear, and everybody will say of you, "He must be right, or he would not so boldly proclaim things so marvelous."

A sure means of not yielding to the desire to kill yourself is to have always something to do.

Opinion rules the world, and wise men rule opinion.

All nature is nothing but mathematics.

To make a good book, one must have a prodigious length of time and the patience of a saint.

The human race would be too unhappy if it were as common to commit atrocious things as it is to believe them.

Most men die without having lived.

Who ought to be the king's favorite? The people.

I know no great men except those who have rendered great services to the human race.

Yes, without doubt, peace is of more value than truth; that is to say, we must not vex our neighbor by arguments: but it is necessary to seek the soul's peace in truth, and to tread under foot the monstrous errors which would perturb it, and render it the prey of knaves.

Controversy never convinced any man; men can be influenced by making them think for themselves, by seeming to doubt with them, by leading them as if by the hand, without their perceiving it. A good book lent to them, which they read at leisure, produces upon them surer effects, because they do not then blush to be subjugated by the superior reason of an antagonist.

WE ARE in this world only to do good in it.

THE more you know, the less sure you are.

COUNTRY LIFE

From the 'Correspondence'

TO MADAME DU DEFFAND

I OWE life and health to the course I have taken. If I dared I would believe myself wise, so happy am I. I have lived only since the day I chose my retreat; every other kind of life would now be insupportable to me. Paris is necessary to you; to me it would be deadly: every one must remain in his element. I am very sorry that mine is incompatible with yours, and it is assuredly my only affliction. You wished also to try the country: it is not suitable to you. The taste for proprietorship and labor is absolutely necessary when you live in the country. I have very extensive possessions, which I cultivate. I make more account of your drawing-room than of my grain-fields and my pastures; but it was my destiny to end my career between drills, cows, and Genevese.

TO DUPONT

A VAST rustic house, with wagons loaded with the spoils of the fields, coming and going by four great gateways. The pillars of oak which sustain the whole frame are placed at equal distances upon pedestals of stone; long stables are seen on the right and on the left. Fifty cows, properly fastened, occupy one side, with their calves; the horses and oxen are on the other side: their fodder falls into their racks from immense mows above. The floors where the grain is threshed are in the middle; and you know that all the animals lodged in their several places in this great edifice have a lively sense that the forage, the hay, the oats, which it contains, belong to them of right. To the south of these beautiful monuments of agriculture are the poultry-yards and sheepfolds; to the north are the presses, store-rooms, fruit-houses; to the east are the abodes of the manager and thirty servants; toward the west extend large meadows, pastured and fertilized by all the animals, companions of the labor of man. The trees of the orchard, loaded with fruits, small and great, are still another source of wealth. Four or five hundred beehives are set up near a little stream which waters this orchard. The bees give to the possessor a considerable harvest of honey and wax, without his troubling himself with all the fables which are told of that industrious creature; without endeavoring in vain to learn whether that nation lives under the rule of a pretended queen who presents her subjects with sixty to eighty thousand children. There are some avenues of mulberry-trees as far as the eye can reach, the leaves of which nourish those precious worms which are not less useful than the bees. A part of this vast inclosure is formed by an impenetrable rampart of hawthorn, neatly clipped, which rejoices the senses of smell and sight.

VOLTAIRE TO ROUSSEAU

From the ‹Correspondence›

I HAVE received, monsieur, your new book against the human race; I thank you for it. You will please men to whom you tell truths which concern them, but you will not correct them. One could not paint in stronger colors the horrors of human society, from which our ignorance and our weakness expect so many consolations. No one has ever employed so much intellect in the attempt to prove us beasts. A desire seizes us to walk on four paws, when we read your work. Nevertheless, as it is more than sixty years since I lost the habit, I feel, unfortunately, that it is impossible for me to resume it; and I leave that natural mode of walking to those who are more worthy of it than you and I. Nor can I embark to go among the savages of Canada: first because the maladies with which I am afflicted detain me near the greatest physician in Europe, and I should not find the same succor among the Missouris; secondly because war has broken out in that country, and the example of our nation has rendered the savages almost as wicked as we are. I limit myself to be a peaceful savage in the solitude which I have chosen in your country, where you ought to be.

I agree with you that literature and the sciences have sometimes been the cause of much evil. The enemies of Tasso rendered his life a tissue of misfortunes; those of Galileo made him groan in prison at the age of seventy years for having known the motion of the earth, and what was more shameful, they compelled him to retract. No sooner had your friends begun the 'Dictionnaire Encyclopédique' than those who presumed to be their rivals called them deists, atheists, and even Jansenists.

If I dared to reckon myself among those whose labors have been recompensed by persecution alone, I should show you men in a rage to destroy me, from the day that I gave the tragedy of 'Œdipe'; I should show you a library of ridiculous calumnies printed against me; an ex-Jesuit priest, whom I saved from capital punishment, paying me by defamatory libels for the service which I had rendered him; I should show you a man still more culpable, printing my own work upon the 'Age of Louis XIV.,' with notes, in which the most brutal ignorance poured forth the most infamous impostures; . . . I should show you society infested with this kind of men, unknown to all antiquity, who, not being able to embrace an honest calling, whether that of workman or of lackey, and knowing unfortunately how to read and write, become courtiers of literature, live upon our works, steal manuscripts, disfigure them, and sell them; . . . I should paint you ingratitude, imposture, and rapine pursuing me for forty years, even to the foot of the Alps, even to the brink of my tomb. But what shall I conclude from all these tribulations? That I ought not to complain; that Pope, Descartes, Bayle, Camoens, and a hundred others, have experienced the same injustice and greater; that this destiny is that of almost all those whom the love of letters has too powerfully influenced.

Confess, monsieur, that these are trifling private misfortunes, which the community scarcely perceives. What does it matter to the human race that some hornets pillage the honey of some bees? Men of letters make a great noise about all these little quarrels; the rest of the world does not know them, or laughs at them.

Of all the bitternesses spread over human life, these are the least fatal. The thorns attached to literature and to the reputation which it gives are flowers compared with other evils, which in all times have overwhelmed the earth. Admit that neither Cicero, nor Varro, nor Lucretius, nor Virgil, nor Horace, had the least share in the proscriptions. Marius was an ignorant man; the barbarous Sylla, the debauched Antony, the imbecile Lepidus, read little of Plato and Socrates; and as to that tyrant without courage, Octavius Cepias, surnamed so unworthily Augustus, he was merely a detestable assassin while he was deprived of the society of men of letters.

Confess that Petrarch and Boccaccio did not cause the intestine troubles of Italy; confess that the badinage of Marot did not cause the massacre of St. Bartholomew, nor the tragedy of 'The Cid' the troubles of the Fronde. Great crimes have seldom been committed except by celebrated ignoramuses. That which makes, and will always make, of this world a vale of tears, is the insatiable cupidity and the indomitable pride of men, from Thomas Kouli-kan who did not know how to read, to a clerk of the tax office who knows only how to cipher. Literature nourishes the soul, rectifies it, consoles it: it was of service to you, monsieur, at the time when you wrote against it. You are like Achilles who inveighed against glory, and like Father Malebranche whose brilliant imagination wrote against imagination.

If any one ought to complain of literature, it is myself, since at all times and in all places it has served to persecute me: but we must love it, despite the abuse which is made of it, as we must love society, the agreeableness of which is corrupted by so many wicked men; as we must love our country, whatever injustice we suffer in it; as we must love and serve the Supreme Being, notwithstanding the superstitions and fanaticism which so often dishonor his worship.

M. Chappuis informs me that your health is very bad: you should come to re-establish it in your native air, to enjoy liberty, to drink with me the milk of our cows, and browse our herbs. I am very philosophically, and with the most tender esteem, etc.

THE DRAMA

From a Letter to an Italian Nobleman

The theatre is the chef-d'œuvre of society. Men in general are compelled to labor at the mechanic arts, and their time is happily occupied; while men of rank and wealth have the misfortune to be abandoned to themselves, to the ennui inseparable from idleness, to gaming more fatal than ennui, to petty factions more dangerous than play and idleness.

What is the true drama? It is the art of teaching virtue and good manners by action and dialogue. How cold in comparison is the eloquence of monologue! Have we retained a single phrase of thirty or forty thousand moral discourses? And do we not know by heart admirable sentences placed with art in interesting dialogues? "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto."

It is this which makes one of the great merits of Terence; it is that of our own good tragedies, of our good comedies. They have not excited a profitless admiration; they have often corrected men. I have seen a prince pardon an injury after a representation of the clemency of Augustus. A princess, who had despised her mother, went away to throw herself at her feet after witnessing the scene in which Rhodope asks her mother's forgiveness. A man well known sought reconciliation with his wife after seeing 'Préjudice à la Mode.' I saw the proudest man in the world become modest after the comedy of the 'Glorieux.' And I could cite more than six sons of distinguished families whom the comedy of the 'Prodigal Son' reformed. If our bankers are no longer coarse, if the people of the court are vain dandies no longer, if doctors have abjured the robe, the cap, and consultations in Latin, if some pedants have become men,—to what are we indebted for it? To the theatre,—to the theatre alone.

What pity ought we not, then, to have for those who wage war upon this first of the literary arts; who imagine that we ought to judge the theatre of to-day by the trestles of our ages of ignorance; and who confound Sophocles, Menander, Varius, and Terence, with Tabarin and Punch! But how much more to be pitied are they *who admit Punch and Tabarin, while rejecting 'Polyeucte,' 'Athalie,' 'Zaïre,' and 'Alzire'!* Such are the inconsistencies into which the human mind falls every day.

Let us pardon the deaf who speak against music, the blind who hate beauty: such persons are less enemies of society, less conspirators to destroy its consolation and its charm, than the unfortunate beings to whom nature has denied certain organs.

I have had the pleasure of seeing at my country-house 'Alzire' performed,—that tragedy wherein Christianity and the rights of man triumph equally. I have seen Mérope's maternal love bringing tears without the aid of the love of gallantry. Such subjects move the rudest soul, as they do the most refined; and if the common people were in the habit of witnessing such spectacles of human worth, there would be fewer souls gross and obdurate. It was such exhibitions that made the Athenians a superior nation. Their workmen did not spend upon indecent farces the money which should have nourished their families; but the magistrates, during their celebrated festivals, summoned the whole nation to representations which taught virtue and the love of country. The plays which are given among us are but a feeble imitation of that magnificence; but after all, they do preserve some idea of it. They are the most beautiful education which we can give to youth, the noblest recreation after labor, the best instruction for all orders of citizens; they furnish almost the only mode of getting people together for the purpose of rendering them social beings.

TO THEURIET

Yes, I *will* scold you till I have cured you of your indolence. You live as if man had been created only to sup; and you exist only between 10 P. M. and 2 A. M. When you are old and deserted, will it be a consolation to you to say, "Formerly I drank champagne in good company"?

GREATNESS AND UTILITY

From 'Letters on the English'

Whoever arrives in Paris from the depths of a remote province, with money to spend and a name in *ac* or *ille*, can talk about "a man like me," "a man of my quality," and hold a merchant in sovereign contempt. The merchant again so constantly hears his business spoken of with disdain that he is fool enough to blush for it. Yet is there not a question which is the more useful to a State,—a thickly bepowdered lord who knows exactly at what time the King rises and what time he goes to bed, and gives himself mighty airs of greatness while he plays the part of a slave in a minister's ante-room; or the merchant who enriches his country, gives orders from his counting-house at Surat or Cairo, and contributes to the happiness of a whole globe?

Not long ago a distinguished company were discussing the trite and frivolous question who was the greatest man, Cæsar, Alexander, Tamerlane, or Cromwell. Somebody answered that it was undoubtedly Isaac Newton. He was right; for if true greatness consists in having received from heaven a powerful understanding, and in using it to enlighten one's self and all others, then such a one as Newton, who is hardly to be met with once in ten centuries, is in truth the great man. . . . It is to him who masters our minds by the force of truth, not to those who enslave men by violence; it is to him who understands the universe, not to those who disfigure it,—that we owe our reverence!

TO A LADY

You wonder how time ne'er subdues
(Though eighty years have left their chill)
My superannuated Muse,
That hums a quavering measure still.

In wintry wolds a tuft of bloom
Will sometimes through the snowdrifts smile,
Consoling nature in her gloom,
But withering in a little while.

A bird will trill a chirping note,
Though summer's leaves and light be o'er,
But melody forsakes his throat—
He sings the song of love no more.

'Tis thus I still my harp entune,
Whose strings no more my touch obey;
'Tis thus I lift my voice, though soon
That voice will silent be for aye.

Tibullus to his mistress said,
"I would thus breathe my last adieu,
My eyes still with your glances fed,
My dying hand caressing you."

But when this world grows all remote,
When with the life the soul must go,
Can yet the eye on Delia dote?
The hand a lover's touch bestow?

Death changes, as we pass his gate,
What in our days of strength we knew:
Who would with joy anticipate
At his last gasp love's rendezvous?

And Delia, in her turn, no less
Must pass into eternal night,
Oblivious of her loveliness,
Oblivious of her youth's delight.

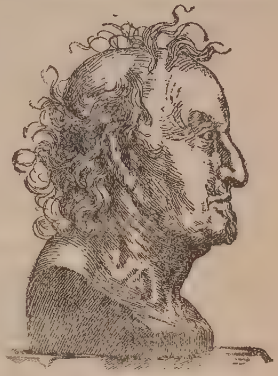
We enter life, we play our part,
We die — nor learn the reason here;
From out the unknown void we start,
And whither bound? — God knows, my dear.

Translation of Edward Bruce Hamley.

JOOST VAN DER VONDEL

(1587-1679)

The long life of Joost van der Vondel, Holland's greatest poet, was contemporaneous with the most brilliant period of the Dutch renaissance. As triumphant England in Elizabeth's reign brought forth mighty children, so the new-born Republic of the United Provinces in its turn gave birth to such men as Hooft and Vondel, Brederoo and Huygens. The background of Vondel's life was the city of Amsterdam, whose society, representative perhaps of the most assertive forces in Holland's intellectual and spiritual development, was expressing its intense vitality in the pursuit of literature, of art, in the heats of religious controversy, seeking in a thousand ways to give metropolitan embodiment to the new-born national consciousness. To this city Vondel had come as a boy. He had been born at Cologne, November 17th, 1587; his maternal grandfather, Peter Kranken, had taken no mean rank among the poets of Brabant. His parents were Anabaptists, who moved from city to city in the pursuit of religious freedom, settling finally at Amsterdam.



Joost van der Vondel

Vondel, being designed for a tradesman, received but an indifferent education; his innate love of learning drawing him, however, to independent study, he was throughout his long life a student, seeking his inspiration at the fountain-heads of culture. In 1612 he produced his first drama, 'Het Pascha,' the subject of which was the Exodus of the Children of Israel. After the approved Dutch model, it was written in Alexandrines, in five acts, with choral interludes between. It gave little evidence of the genius which was to produce 'Lucifer.' For the next eight years Vondel did no original work, being seemingly satisfied with the leisurely development of his powers. The death of Brederoo, Holland's greatest comic dramatist, left a high place vacant, which Vondel was soon to fill. In 1620 he published a second tragedy, 'Jerusalem Laid Desolate'; and in 1625 a third, which secured him his fame. ‘Palamedes, or Murdered Innocence,’ owed its notoriety as much perhaps to the nature of its subject as to its intrinsic merits; appearing as it did at a time when all Holland was palpitating with religious controversy. In the hero of the play, Palamedes, the people of Amsterdam recognized Barneveldt; whose support of the Arminian doctrine had led to his execution in 1618 through the powerful influence of the Calvinists, headed by Prince Maurice of Nassau. Vondel at once became popular with the highest circles in Amsterdam and Holland. The obscure tradesman obtained fame in a night. Plunging into the controversy, he now began to wage war against the Counter-Remonstrants, as the Calvinists were termed; launching at them a great number of satirical pamphlets in verse, among the most noted of which are ‘The Harpoon,’ ‘The Horse-Comb,’ and ‘The Decretum Horrible.’

In 1638 an event occurred which diverted the genius of Vondel into another channel. The Dutch Academy, founded in 1617 as in the main a dramatic guild, had later coalesced with the two noted chambers of rhetoric, the «Eglantine» and the «White Lavender.» In 1638, on the strength of these reinforcements, it erected what it had long needed, a large public theatre. On the opening night a new tragedy by Vondel was presented,—‘Gysbreght van Aemstel,’ founded upon incidents in early Dutch history. For many years following, Vondel wrote Scriptural pieces for the theatre in the heroic style; among them, ‘Solomon,’ ‘Samson,’ ‘Adonijah,’ ‘Adam in Banishment,’ and ‘Noah, or the Destruction of the Old World.’ In 1654 appeared his great masterpiece, ‘Lucifer’; a tragedy of sublime conception, to which a peculiar interest is attached as being supposedly the work which suggested to Milton the subject of ‘Paradise Lost.’ Milton is known to have studied the Dutch language about the time of the production of ‘Lucifer’; there are verbal correspondences between the two plays. The theory of Milton’s indebtedness to Vondel has been considered by Thomas Lovell Beddoes, by Edmund Gosse, and by Mr. George Edmundson in a monograph entitled ‘Milton and Vondel.’ Vondel’s ‘Lucifer,’ however, is concerned with the fall of Lucifer and not with the fall of Adam.

The years following the production of his mightiest tragedy were full of labor and sorrow to Vondel. Reverses had come upon him; from 1658 to 1668 he was obliged to work as a clerk in a bank, a servant of hard taskmasters, who were incapable of appreciation of or reverence for his genius. In his eightieth year he was liberated from this slavery by the city of Amsterdam, from which he received a pension. Until his death in 1679 Vondel continued to write, his literary energy being seemingly inexhaustible. Among his works of this period is a rendition of the ‘Metamorphoses’ of Ovid into

Dutch verse. His entire writings fill nine quarto volumes, embracing almost every conceivable subject and every well-known verse form. Vondel remains the most powerful, and perhaps the most representative, poet of Holland, whose writings gave adequate embodiment to the manifold forces of her golden age.

TO GEERAERT VOSSIUS

ON THE LOSS OF HIS SON

WHY mourn'st thou, Vossius? why has pain
Its furrows to thy pale brow given?
Seek not to hold thy son from heaven!
'Tis heaven that draws,—resign him, then!

Yes, banish every futile tear;
And offer to its Source above,
In gratitude and humble love,
The choicest of thy treasures here.

We murmur if the bark should strand;
But not when richly laden she
Comes from the wild and raging sea,
Within a haven safe to land.

We murmur if the balm be shed:
Yes, murmur for the odor's sake;
But not whene'er the glass may break,
If that which filled it be not fled.

He strives in vain who seeks to stay
The bounding waters in their course,
When hurled from rocks with giant force,
Towards some calm and spacious bay.

Thus turns the earthly globe;—though o'er
His infant's corse a father mourn,
Or child bedew its parents' urn,
Death passes neither house nor door.

Death nor for gay and blooming youth,
Nor peevish age, his stroke defers;
He chains the lips of orators,
Nor cares for wisdom, worth, or truth.

Blest is the mind that, fixed and free,
To wanton pleasures scorns to yield,
And wards as with a pliant shield
The arrows of adversity.

Translation of Sir John Bowring.

FROM ‹LUCIFER›

[The scene of the drama is laid throughout in heaven. The actors are the angels. Lucifer has sent Apollyon to Eden to view the new-made man and woman, and to inquire into their state. Apollyon thus describes Eve.]

SEARCH all our angel bands, in beauty well arrayed,
They will but monsters seem, by the dawn-light of a maid.

Beelzebub —
It seems you burn in love for this new womankind!

Apollyon —
My great wing-feather in that amorous flame, I find
I've singed! 'Twas hard indeed to soar up from below,
To sweep, and reach the verge of Angel-borough so;
I parted, but with pain, and three times looked around:
There shines no seraph form in all the ethereal bound
Like hers, whose hanging hair, in golden glory, seems
To rush down from her head in a torrent of sunbeams,
And flow along her back. So clad in light and grace,
Stately she treads, and charms the daylight with her face:
Let pearls and mother o' pearl their claims before her furl,
Her brightness passes far the beauty of a pearl!

Beelzebub —
But what can profit man this beauty that must fade,
And wither like a flower, and shortly be decayed?

[Lucifer's jealousy of the new race being aroused, he thus addresses his attendant angels.]

Swift spirits, let us stay the chariot of the dawn;
For high enough, in sooth, God's morning star is drawn,—
Yea, driven up high enough! 'tis time for my great car
To yield before the advent of this double star,
That rises from below, and seeks, in sudden birth,
To tarnish heaven's gold with splendor from the earth!

Embroider no more crowns on Lucifer's attire,
And gild his forehead not with eminent dawn-fire
Of the morning star enrayed, that rapt archangels prize;
For see another blaze in the light of God arise!
The stars grow faint before the eyes of men below;
'Tis night with angels, and the heavens forget to glow.

[The loyal angels, perceiving that a change has come over a number of their order, inquire into its cause.]

Why seem the courteous angel-faces
So red? Why streams the holy light
So red upon our sight,
Through clouds and mists from mournful places?
What vapor dares to blear
The pure, unspotted, clear
And luminous sapphire?
The flame, the blaze, the fire
Of the bright Omnipotence?
Why does the splendid light of God
Glow, deepened to the hue of blood,
That late, in flowing hence,
Gladdened all hearts?

[The chorus answers.]

When we, enkindled and uplifted
By Gabriel's trumpet, in new ways
Began to chant God's praise,
The perfume of rose-gardens drifted
Through paths of Paradise,
And such a dew and such a spice
Distilled, that all the flowery grass
Rejoiced. But Envy soon, alas!
From the underworld came sneaking.
A mighty crowd of spirits, pale
And dumb and wan, came, tale on tale,
Displeased, some new thing seeking;
With brows that crushed each scowling eye,
And happy foreheads bent and wrinkled:
The doves of heaven, here on high,
Whose innocent pinions sweetly twinkled,
Are struck with mourning, one and all,
As though the heavens were far too small

For them, now Adam's been elected,
And such a crown for man selected.
This blemish blinds the light of grace,
And dulls the flaming of God's face.

[Beelzebub, feigning submission to Deity, thus addresses the rebel angels.]

Oh, cease from wailing; rend your badges and your robes
No longer without cause, but make your faces bright,
And let your foreheads flash, O children of the light!
The shrill sweet throats, that thank the Deity with song,
Behold, and be ashamed that ye have mixed so long
Discords and bastard tones with music so divine.

[They appeal from him to Lucifer.]

Forbid it, Lucifer, nor suffer that our ranks
Be mortified so low and sink without a crime,
While man, above us raised, may flash and beam sublime
In the very core of light, from which we seraphim
Pass quivering, full of pain, and fade like shadows dim. . . .
We swear, by force, beneath thy glorious flag combined,
To set *thee* on the throne for Adam late designed!
We swear, with one accord, to stay thine arm forever:
Lift high thy battle-axe! our wounded rights deliver!

[Gabriel relates to Michael the effect which the knowledge of the rebellion produced at the throne of God himself.]

I saw God's very gladness with a cloud of woe
O'ershadowed; and there burst a flame out of the gloom
That pierced the eye of light, and hung, a brand of doom,
Ready to fall in rage. I heard the mighty cause
Where Mercy pleaded long with God's all-righteous laws;
Grace, soothly wise and meek, with Justice arguing well.
I saw the cherubim, who on their faces fell,
And cried out, «Mercy, mercy! God, let Justice rest!»
But even as that shrill sound to his great footstool pressed,
And God seemed almost moved to pardon and to smile,
Up curled the odious smoke of incense harsh and vile,
Burned down below in praise of Lucifer, who rode
With censers and bassoons and many a choral ode:
The heaven withdrew its face from such impieties,
Cursèd of God and spirits and all the hierarchies.

[The rebel angels form themselves into an army. They fight against Michael and his host, and are conquered. The victorious angels sing.]

Blest be the hero's hour,
Who smote the godless power,
And his might, and his light, and his standard,
Down toppling like a tower:
His crown was near God's own,
But from his lofty throne,
With his might, into night he hath vanished;
God's name must shine alone.
Outblazed the uproar fell,
When valorous Michaël
With the brand in his hand quenched the passion
Of spirits that dared rebel.
He holds God's banner now;
With laurels crown his brow!
Peace shall reign here again, and her forehead
Shall vanquished Discord bow.
Amid the conquering throng
Praises to God belong;
Honor bring to the King of all kingdoms!
He gives us stuff for song.

[After this, Gabriel enters bearing the tidings of man's fall.]

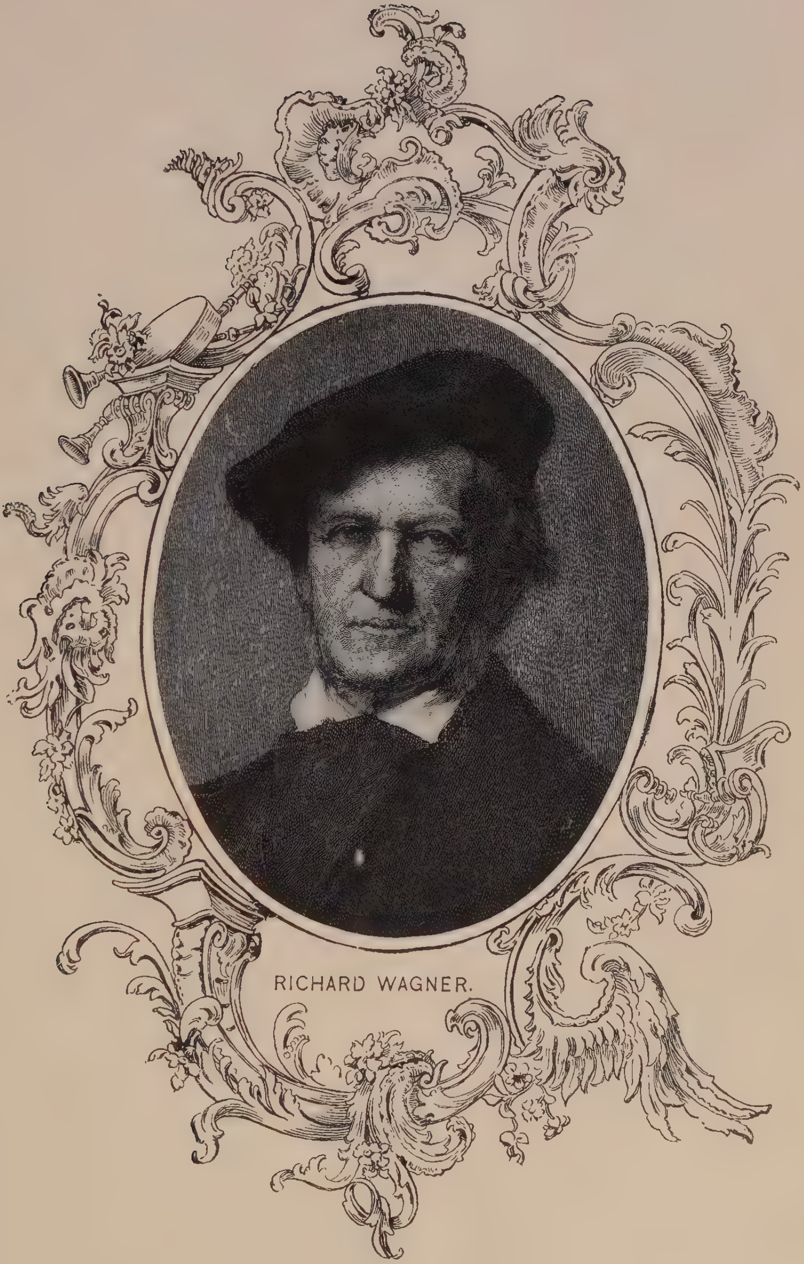
Gabriel—
Alas! alas! alas! to adverse fortune bow!
What do ye here? In vain are songs of triumph now;
In vain of spoil of arms and gonfalons ye boast!
Michael—
What hear I, Gabriel?
Gabriel— Oh, Adam is fallen and lost!
The father and the stock of all the human race
Most grievously hath erred, and lies in piteous case.

[Michael sends Uriel to drive the guilty pair out of Eden, and then thus pronounces the doom of the rebel angels.]

Ozias, to whose fist the very Godhead gave
The heavy hammer framed of diamond beaten out,
And chains of ruby, clamps, and teeth of metal stout,—
Go hence, and take and bind the hellish host that rage,
Lion and dragon fell, whose banners dared to wage
War with us thus. Speed swift on their accursèd flight,
And bind them neck and claw, and fetter them with might.

The key which to the gates of their foul pit was fitted
Is, Azarias, now into thy care committed;
Go hence, and thrust therein all that our power defied.
Maçeda, take this torch I to your zeal confide,
And flame the sulphur-pool in the centre of the world:
There torture Lucifer, and leave his body curled
In everlasting fire, with many a prince accursed;
Where Sorrow, wretched Pain, numb Horror, Hunger, Thirst,
Despair without a hope, and Conscience with her sting,
May measure out their meed of endless suffering.

Translation from the Cornhill Magazine.



RICHARD WAGNER.

RICHARD WAGNER

(1813–1883)

BY CHARLES HARVEY GENUNG

No name in the history of music occupies at the same time in the annals of literature so high a place, and with so secure a title, as that of Richard Wagner. He was a philosopher, who, with a nervous incisive prose which almost rivaled that of his master Schopenhauer, was able to set forth the theories by which his creative genius was guided; and he was a poet of supreme eminence in a field quite his own, reconstructing in form and spirit the splendid conceptions of the legendary ages, and infusing into the characters of that heroic time the more complicated emotions of our modern days. He displayed a power of dramatic construction, and a depth of poetic imagination, that rank him among the great romantic poets of the nineteenth century. When Schopenhauer read the text of the 'Nibelungen' trilogy he exclaimed, «The fellow is a poet, not a musician;» and again, «He ought to hang music on the nail: he has more genius for poetry.» But the might of Wagner's musical genius long obscured the poet's fame. Critics continued to sneer at the lines long after they had conceded the merit of the scores; but it is a crowning tribute to the greatness of the poet-composer that now a whole literature has arisen around his operas as poems, and the process still goes on. It is a remarkable coincidence that in the very town of Bayreuth, where since 1876 the Wagner festivals have been held, Jean Paul Richter in a preface to a book of E. T. W. Hoffmann's wrote the half-prophetic words: «Hitherto Apollo has always distributed the poetic gift with his right hand, the musical with his left, to two persons so widely apart that up to this hour we are still waiting for the man who will create a genuine opera by writing both its text and its music.»

In the very year in which these words were written, Richard Wagner was born in Leipsic on May 22d, 1813. It is not to the present purpose to follow his career in biographical detail. The fatuous prophecies of criticism which followed him through life began when his music-teacher announced in disgust that he would never amount to anything. The creative impulse in him was early manifested when he wrote an ambitious tragedy, in which, having killed off all but one of forty-one characters, he was obliged to have some of them return as ghosts in order to save the last act from being a monologue. When he was sixteen he turned to music, and after a week's study he found its difficulties so great that he resolved to become a musician. Difficulties stimulated his energy. The germ of the ideas by which Wagner subsequently revolutionized the operatic stage lay already in the mind of Carl Maria von Weber, who, as early as 1817, had begun a campaign against the empty forms of the Italian-French opera. In Weber's 'Euryanthe' Wagner found suggestion and inspiration; and in 1843 he succeeded to the position that Weber had held in Dresden, of court capellmeister. The commonplaceness of his early operas, and the Meyerbeer-like blatancy of 'Rienzi,' was less a concession to public taste than the result of an irresistible creative impulse with artistic aims as yet undefined. But when these aims became definite, never did an artist pursue his purpose with a more relentless energy in the face of gigantic obstacles. He defied the public taste in the midst of poverty and ridicule; the more discouraging his reception, the more absolute became his adherence to his ideals. There was something victorious in his resolute nature, which, quite apart from the originality and intrinsic beauty of his works, made him one of the formative forces of his age.

During the days of poverty in Paris, Wagner began his series of essays with a short story entitled 'A Pilgrimage to Beethoven.' Already a new world was dawning upon him; but it was at the time of the general revolutionary movement in Europe that he began to publish the works which proclaimed the revolution in art. The first was entitled 'Art and Revolution' (1849); the much-discussed 'Art Work of the Future' appeared in the following year; and in 1851 the 'Communication to my Friends,' and 'Opera and Drama.' In these works Wagner had not yet developed the powerful prose style of his later period: the metaphysician in him led him into what Mr. Finck has called "sophomoric bombast," and sometimes into unintelligibility. To the public of that day it all appeared unintelligible. In the 'Communication to my Friends,' first published as a preface to the poems of 'The Flying Dutchman,' 'Tannhäuser,' and 'Lohengrin,' the plan of a Nibelung festival was announced. 'Opera and Drama,' the most important of these revolutionary treatises, is in three parts: of the Opera, of the Drama, and of the Music Drama. Of these the third part has permanent value: it is the statement of his ideals and the programme of his life. All the arts are to be merged into one composite but unified art work. Architecture and painting contribute the scenery, the actor is the sculptured figure, while poetry and music unite in drama, orchestra, and voice.

With such ideas as these, it was obvious at once that the theatre as then constituted must be revolutionized. Wagner fought against the degradation of the theatre to a mere place of entertainment. The relations of art to public life were the burden of his argument. The great Wagner strife was thus of much wider scope than the musical questions involved. The national drama, or as Wagner called it, true German *art*, was to be the highest expression of the culture and artistic capabilities of the German people; and this art work, Wagner, by his own unaided genius, stood ready to create. A self-confidence so colossal moved to astonishment and scornful laughter; but the battle has been won, and the only echoes of the days of strife are the self-apologetic phrases of the former scoffers, who have slowly become conscious that the lack lay in them, while the works of the master exist by their own right and might. They received their consecration in the pilgrimage temple of Bayreuth in 1876 and 1882.

That the extravagant theories of Wagner, with their contravention of artistic limitations and their socialistic coloring, have not been carried out in their entirety, is perfectly true. The genius of the artist was superior to the reasoning of the theorizer. What Wagner did, viewed from the standpoint of literature, was to create a national music-drama, based upon ancient Germanic traditions and legends, about which he threw the gorgeous mantle of his harmonies. In addition to the beauty of the poetic conceptions, the literary artist appears in the perfect adaptation of each phrase and word and vowel, not only to the dramatic expression of the thought but to the needs of the human voice as well. His method of treating themes associates them inseparably with certain thoughts, so that the words come involuntarily to the mind: and in the midst of all the action, the orchestra speaks an articulate language; suggests, warns, alarms, melts, threatens, or moves to tears of sympathy or joy,—produces in short that «demonic» emotion, the effect beyond all for which the reason can account, the effect which Goethe considered the highest achievement of all art. Indeed, the music will not yield the whole secret of its charm until the words, the poetic thought, and the entire dramatic conception, have become completely a part of the hearer's mental equipment. To this quality of Wagner's works the art of the poet contributed as much as the genius of the composer.

For the material through which to give national expression to the culture of the German people, Wagner turned, like a true poet of Romanticism, to the heroic traditions of his race. In the 'Flying Dutchman' it is a sombre legend of the sea; in 'Tannhäuser' it is the famous contest of the thirteenth century when the Minnesingers strove together in song in the hall of the Wartburg; in 'Lohengrin' and 'Parsifal' it is the mediæval tradition of the Holy Grail; in 'Tristan und Isolde' it is the most popular love tale of the Middle Ages; and finally in 'Der Ring des Nibelungen' (The Nibelungs'

Ring), Wagner has combined in a colossal work of wonderful unity and beauty the most ancient poetic legends of the Germanic peoples, the legends out of which seven centuries before Wagner's time some unnamed poet created Germany's most national epic,—the 'Nibelungenlied.' To have created anew these splendid conceptions of the poetic past, is not the least of Wagner's merit. His works, in addition to their æsthetic value, have a value of the moral sort as well: in them speaks the deep soul of a historic people, with its moral earnestness, its childlike love of song and legend, its martial strength and its manly tenderness.

The central theme of all these poems is love. It is through Senta's love, faithful unto death, that the curse is removed from the Flying Dutchman. Through the power of Elizabeth's pure passion and incessant prayers, Tannhäuser is at last delivered from the bondage of the Venusberg. In 'Lohengrin,' love is the manifestation of the Divine mercy; and a knight of the Holy Grail comes, swan-drawn, from his inaccessible temple to rescue a maiden in distress. He becomes her husband and protector, but Elsa, tempted of evil, puts the fatal question: her faith was insufficient, and her lord returns to the service of the Grail.

'Tristan und Isolde' is the apotheosis of earthly passion. Into this Celtic legend, of which Gottfried von Strassburg in the thirteenth century had made a German epic, Wagner has introduced a modern psychology; and he has given the poem a new significance. He has retained the love potion, but he has not made it the cause of the lover's passion. They loved before, but Tristan is resolutely faithful to King Mark; and Isolde is wounded to the quick that Tristan should have wooed her in another's name. The potion symbolizes the irresistible power of a love that bears down all obstacles and stifles all considerations. The triumph, the reconcilement, the nirvana of their passion, is attained only in death. This work must be numbered among the greatest love poems of literature.

And so too in the 'Nibelungen' trilogy, love is not only the theme, but in the end the force that conquers even in death. In 'Rheingold' the power of love is contrasted with the lust for gold; and here the keynote is struck, and the tragedy set in motion. The love and faithfulness of Siegmund and Sieglinde in the 'Walküre' show Brünnhilde for the first time what love can do; and when Siegfried, in the idyllic fairy tale that bears his name, awakens her from her long sleep, she throws aside her Walküren nature for the joy of human love. Siegfried is the free fate-defying man, triumphing over the powers of darkness and destiny; to him Wotan, ever seeking guidance from the mother of wisdom, is forced to yield. In the 'Götterdämmerung' the god awaits the fullness of time, while the guileless Siegfried falls a victim to the wiles of man. But the end towards which Wotan blindly strove is attained by Siegfried's death. Brünnhilde, to whom the counsels of the gods are known, restores the symbolic ring to the daughters of the Rhine, and in twilight the ancient reign of the gods comes to an end. The reign of love is proclaimed as Brünnhilde immolates herself upon Siegfried's funeral pyre. But the symbolism which it is so easy to find in these operas, and so easy to exaggerate, is unimportant, if not wholly negligible. The Nibelung poems are fairy tales; it is the buoyant spirit of the young German race that revels here in the poetry and legends of its childhood, and as fairy tales these works should be enjoyed.

Wagner died in Venice on February 13th, 1883. In the preceding year he had seen his life work crowned by the performance of 'Parsifal' at Bayreuth. Wolfram von Eschenbach's 'Parzifal,' the finest courtly epic of the Middle Ages, Wagner has wrought into a music-drama of even greater moral significance and beauty. Wolfram's salvation of Parsifal through self-renunciation, as in 'Faust,' has in Wagner's work become the salvation of humanity through all-saving pity. This is love sublimated into its most unselfish form. The central thought is announced by an invisible chorus from the dome of the temple of the Holy Grail:—

«Made wise through pity
The guileless fool:
Wait for him,
My chosen tool.»

And Parsifal, once found wanting, attains at last, through paths of pain and error, the wisdom of pity. He is the chosen tool of the Divine power for the salvation of suffering sinners.

One great opera remains to be mentioned, and that which is probably destined to be Wagner's most popular work,—'The Mastersingers of Nuremberg.' This, unless we include 'Siegfried,' as Wagner once did, is his only comic opera; and that in a sense widely different from the ordinary. 'The Mastersingers' gives a wonderful picture of German life in the early sixteenth century. The humorous and serious elements are so artistically woven around the central story of Walther's and Eva's love, that as a play this poem must be pronounced the finest example of Wagner's dramatic power. With a blending of satire and genial appreciation, Wagner has herein set forth his own theories of musical art and ridiculed the formalists. Hans Sachs is one of the most winning of all his creations, and through him the poet expresses his own philosophy. Walther, in his exquisite song before the Mastersingers in the first act, attempts to conform to the rules, but the marker scores countless mistakes against him; it is only under the instruction of Hans Sachs in the last act that he really composes his master-song.

And as through this opera the golden age of Nuremberg has been made to live again, so have the ancient gods and heroes and mythical happenings of early German legend been impressed upon the modern imagination, as not all the critical texts of the original poems, nor all the efforts of the other Romantic poets, have been able to impress them. They have passed not into the national consciousness only, but these fine old fairy tales and mediæval pictures have become an indispensable part of the culture of the world. If this be to create a national art, Wagner has accomplished his purpose. There is an inscription under a bust of the poet-composer in Leipzig, which in the old alliterative form that he used in the 'Nibelungenring' sums up the genius which has wrought a greater artistic revolution than any other force of this century:—

«Denker und Dichter
Gewaltigen Willens,
Durch Worte und Werke
Wecker und Meister
Musischer Kunst.»

(Thinker and poet of powerful will, by words and by works awakener and master of musical art.)

Chas H Genung

BESIDE THE HEARTH

Beside the hearth, when days were short,
And snow shut in the castle court;
How spring once smiled on mead and brake,
And how she soon would reawake—
A book I read, of ancient make,
Which these good tidings brought me:
Sir Walther of the Vogelweid',
He was the master who taught me.

Then when the snow has left the plain,
And summer days are come again,

What I on winter nights have read,
And all my ancient book hath said,
That echoed loud in forest glade,—
  I heard it clearly ringing;
In woodlands on the Vogelweid',
  'Twas there I learnt my singing.

      What winter night,
      What forest bright,
  What book and woodland told me;
What through the poet's magic might
  So subtly did infold me,—
      The tramp of horse
      In battle course,

      The merry dance
      In war's romance,—
  I heard in music ringing:
But now the stake is life's best prize,
  Which I must win by singing;
The words and air, if 't in me lies,
  And genius shall but speed me,
As mastersong I'll improvise:
  My masters, pray you, heed me.

Translated by Charles Harvey Genung.

THE FUNCTION OF THE ARTIST

From the 'Opera and Drama'

TO RAISE the strangely potent language of the orchestra to such a height, that at every instant it may plainly manifest to feeling the unspeakable of the dramatic situation,—to do this, as we have already said, the musician inspired by the poet's aim has not to haply practice self-restraint; no, he has to sharpen his inventiveness to the point of discovering the most varied orchestral idioms, to meet the necessity he feels of a pertinent, a most determinate expression. So long as this language is incapable of a declaration as individual as is needed by the infinite variety of the dramatic motives themselves; so long as the message of the orchestra is too monochrome to answer these motives' individuality,—so long may it prove a disturbing factor, because not yet completely satisfying: and therefore in the complete drama, like everything that is not entirely adequate, it would divert attention toward itself. To be true to our aim, however, such an attention is absolutely not to be devoted to it; but through its everywhere adapting itself with the utmost closeness to the finest shade of individuality in the dramatic motive, the orchestra is irresistibly to guide our whole attention away from itself, as a means of expression, and direct it to the subject expressed. So that the very richest dialect of the orchestra is to manifest itself with the artistic object of not being noticed,—in a manner of speaking, of not being heard at all; to wit, not heard in its mechanical but only in its organic capacity, wherein it is one with the drama.

How must it discourage the poet-musician, then, were he to see his drama received by the public with sole and marked attention to the mechanism of his orchestra, and to find himself rewarded with just the praise of being a "very clever instrumentalist"! How must he feel at heart,—he whose every shaping was prompted by the dramatic aim,—if art-literarians should report on his drama, that they had read a text-book and had heard, to boot, a wondrous music-ing by flutes and fiddles and trumpets, all working in and out?

But could this drama possibly produce any other effect, under the circumstances detailed above?

And yet! are we to give up being artists? Or are we to abandon all necessary insight into the nature of things because we can draw no profit thence? Were it no profit then to be not only an artist, but a *man* withal; and is an artificial know-nothingness, a womanish dismissal of knowledge, to bring us more profit than a sturdy consciousness, which, if only we put all seeking-of-self behind us, will give us cheerfulness, and hope, and courage above all else, for deeds which needs must rejoice ourselves, how little soever they be crowned with an outward success?

For sure! Even now, it is only knowledge that can prosper us; whilst ignorance but holds us to a joyless, divided, hypochondriacal, scarcely will-ing and never can-ing make-believe of art, whereby we stay unsatisfied within, unsatisfying without.

Look round you, and see where ye live, and for whom ye make your art! That our artistic comrades for the representment of a dramatic art work are not forthcoming, we must recognize at once, if we have eyes the least whit sharpened by artistic will.

Yet how greatly we should err, if we pretended to explain this by a demoralization of our opera-singers due entirely to their own fault; how we should deceive ourselves if we thought necessary to regard this phenomenon as accidental, and not as conditioned by a broad, a general conjuncture! Let us suppose for an instant that in some way or other we acquired the power of so working upon performers and performance, from the standpoint of artistic intelligence, that a highest dramatic aim should be fully carried out,—then for the first time we should grow actively aware that we lacked the real enabler of the art work: a public to feel the need of it, and to make its need the all-puissant fellow-shaper. The public of our theatres has no need for art work: it wants to distract itself, when it takes its seat before the stage, but not to collect itself; and the need of the seeker after distraction is merely for artificial details, but not for an artistic unity. If we gave it a whole, the public would be blindly driven to tear that whole to disconnected fragments, or in the most fortunate event it would be called upon to understand a thing which it altogether refuses to understand; wherefore, in full consciousness, it turns its back on any such artistic aim. From this result we should only gain a proof why such a performance is absolutely out of the question at present, and why our opera singers are bound to be exactly what they are and what they cannot else be.

To account to ourselves for this attitude of the public towards the performance, we must necessarily pass to a judgment on this public itself. If we cast a look at earlier ages of our theatric history, we can only regard this public as involved in an advancing degradation. The excellent work, the pre-eminently fine work that has been done already in our art, we surely cannot consider as dropped upon us from the skies; no, we must conclude that it was prompted withal by the taste of those before whom it was produced. We meet this public of fine taste and feeling at its most marked degree of active interest in art production, in the period of the Renaissance. Here we see princes and nobles not only sheltering art, but so engrossed with its finest and its boldest shapings that the latter must be taken as downright summoned into being by their enthusiastic need. This noble rank,—nowhere attacked in its position; knowing nothing of the misery of the thralls whose life made that position possible; holding itself completely aloof from the industrial and commercial spirit of the burgher life; living away its life of pleasure in its palaces, of courage on the field of battle,— this nobility had trained its eyes and ears to discern the beautiful, the graceful, nay, even the characteristic and energetic; and at its commands arose those works of art which signal that epoch as the most favored artistic period since the downfall of Greek art. The infinite grace and delicacy in Mozart's tone-modelings — which seem so dull and tedious to a public bred to-day on the grotesque — were delighted in by the descendants of that old nobility; and it was to Kaiser Joseph that Mozart appealed, from the mountebankish shamelessness of the singers of his 'Figaro.' Nor will we look askance at those young French cavaliers whose enthusiastic applause at the Achilles aria in Gluck's 'Iphigenia in Tauris' turned the wavering balance in favor of that work; and least of all will we forget that whilst the greater courts of Europe had become the political camps of intriguing diplomats, in Weimar a German royal family was listening with rapt attention to the loftiest and most graceful poets of the German nation.

But the rulership of public taste in art has passed over to the person who now pays the artists' wages, in place of the nobility which erstwhile recompensed them; to the person who orders the art work for his money, and insists on ever novel variations of his one beloved theme, but at no price a new theme itself: and this ruler and this order-giver is — the Philistine. As this Philistine is the most heartless and the basest offspring of our civilization, so is he the most domineering, the cruelest and foulest, of art's bread-givers. True, that everything comes aright to him; only, he will have nothing to do with aught that might remind him that he is to be a man,— either on the side of beauty, or on that of nerve. He wills to be base and common, and to this will of his has art to fit herself; for the rest — why! nothing comes to him amiss. Let us turn our look from him as quickly as may be!

Are we to make bargains with such a world? No, no! For even the most humiliating terms would leave us sheer outside the pale.

Hope, faith, and courage can we only gain, when we recognize even the modern State Philistine not merely as a conditioning, but likewise as a conditioned, factor of our civilization; when we search for the conditionments of this phenomenon, too, in a conjuncture such as that we have just examined in the case of art.

We shall not win hope and nerve until we bend our ear to the heart-beat of history, and catch the sound of that sempiternal vein of living waters, which, however buried under the waste-heap of historic civilization, yet pulses on in all its pristine freshness. Who has not felt the leaden murk that hangs above us in the air, foretelling the near advent of an earth upheaval? And we who hear the trickling of that well-spring, shall we take affright at the earthquake's sound? Believe me, no! For we know that it will only tear aside the heap of refuse, and prepare for the stream that bed in which we soon shall even *see* its living waters flow.

Where now the statesman loses hope, the politician sinks his hands, the socialist beplagues his brain with fruitless systems, yea, even the philosopher can only hint, but not foretell,—since all that looms before us can only form a series of un-willful happenings, whose physical show no mortal man may pre-conceive,—there it is the artist whose clear eye can spy out shapes that reveal themselves to a yearning which longs for the only truth, the *human being*. The artist has the power of seeing beforehand a yet unshapen world, of tasting beforehand the joys of a world as yet unborn, through the stress of his desire for growth. But his joy is in imparting; and if only he turns his back on the senseless herds who browse upon the grassless waste-heap, and clasps the closer to his breast the cherished few who listen with him to the well-spring, so finds he too the hearts—ay, finds the senses—to whom he can impart his message. We are older men and younger: let the elder not think of himself, but love the younger for sake of the bequest he sinks into his heart for new increasing;—the day will come when that heirloom shall be opened for the weal of brother men throughout the world!

We have seen the poet driven onward by his yearning for a perfect emotional expression, and seen him reach the point where he found his verse reflected on the mirror of the sea of harmony, as musical melody: unto this sea was he compelled to thrust; only the mirror of this sea could show him the image of his yearning: and this sea he could not create from his own will; but it was the Other of his being, that wherewith he needs must wed himself, but which he could not prescribe from out himself, nor summon into being. So neither can the artist prescribe from his own will, nor summon into being, that life of the future which once shall redeem him: for it is the Other, the antithesis of himself, for which he yearns, toward which he is thrust; that which, when brought him from an opposite pole, is for the first time present for him, first takes his semblance up into it, and knowably reflects it back. Yet again, this living ocean of the future cannot beget that mirror image by its unaided self: it is a mother element, which can bear alone what it has first received. This fecundating seed, which in *it* alone can thrive, is brought it by the poet,—*i. e.*, the artist of the present: and this seed is the quintessence of all rarest life-sap which the past has gathered up therein, to bring it to the future as its necessary, its fertilizing germ; for this future is not thinkable, except as stipulated by the past.

Now the melody which appears at last upon the water-mirror of the harmonic ocean of the future, is the clear-seeing eye wherewith this life gazes upwards from the depth of its sea abyss to the radiant light of day. But the verse, whose mere mirror-image it is, is the own-est poem of the artist of the present, begotten by his most peculiar faculty, engendered by the fullness of his yearning. And just as this verse, will the prophetic art work of the yearning artist of the present once wed itself with the ocean of the life of the future. In that life of the future, will this art work be what to-day it yearns for, but cannot actually be as yet; for that life of the future will be entirely what it can be, only through its taking up into its womb this art work.

The begetter of the art work of the future is none other than the artist of the present, who presages that life of the future, and yearns to be contained therein. He who cherishes this longing within the inmost chamber of his powers, he lives already in a better life; but only one can do this thing,—the artist.

Translation of William Ashton Ellis.

FROM ‹THE ART WORK OF THE FUTURE›

WHERESOEVER the *folk* made poetry,—and only by the folk, or in the footsteps of the folk, can poetry be really made,—there did the poetic purpose rise to life alone upon the shoulders of the arts of dance and tone, as the *head* of the full-fledged human being. The lyrics of Orpheus would never have been able to turn the savage beasts to silent, placid adoration, if the singer had but given them forsooth some dumb and printed verse to read: their ears must be enthralled by the sonorous notes that came straight from the heart; their carrion-spying eyes be tamed by the proud and graceful movements of the body,— in such a way that they should recognize instinctively in this whole man no longer a mere object for their maw, no mere objective for their feeding powers, but for their hearing and their seeing powers,— before they could be attuned to duly listen to his moral sentences.

Neither was the true *folk-epic* by any means a mere recited poem: the songs of Homer, such as we now possess them, have issued from the critical siftings and compilings of a time in which the genuine epos had long since ceased to live. When Solon made his laws and Pisistratus introduced his political régime, men searched among the ruins of the already fallen epos of the folk, and pieced the gathered heap together for reading service,— much as in the Hohenstaufen times they did with the fragments of the lost Nibelungenlieder. But before these epic songs became the object of such literary care, they had flourished mid the folk, eked out by voice and gesture, as a bodily enacted art work; as it were, a fixed and crystallized blend of lyric song and dance, with predominant lingering on portrayal of the action and reproduction of the heroic dialogue. These epic-lyrical performances form the unmistakable middle stage between the genuine older lyric and tragedy,— the normal point of transition from the one to the other.

Tragedy was therefore the entry of the art work of the folk upon the public arena of political life; and we may take its appearance as an excellent touchstone for the difference in procedure between the art creating of the folk and the mere literary-historical making of the so-called cultured art world. At the very time when live-born Epos became the object of the critical dilettanteism of the court of Pisistratus, it had already shed its blossoms in the people's life: yet not because the folk had lost its true afflatus; but since it was already able to surpass the old, and from unstanchable artistic sources to build the less perfect art work up, until it became the more perfect. For while those pedants and professors in the prince's castle were laboring at the construction of a literary Homer, pampering their own unproductivity with their marvel at their wisdom, by aid of which they yet could only understand the thing that long had passed from life,— Thespis had already slid his car to Athens, had set it up beside the palace walls, dressed out his stage, and stepping from the chorus of the folk, had trodden its planks; no longer did he shadow forth the deeds of heroes, as in the epos, but in these heroes' guise enacted them.

With the folk, all is reality and deed; it does, and then rejoices in the thought of its own doing. Thus the blithe folk of Athens, inflamed by persecution, hunted out from court and city the melancholy sons of Pisistratus; and then bethought it how, by this its deed, it had become a free and independent people. Thus it raised the platform of its stage, and decked itself with tragic masks and raiment of some god or hero, in order itself to be a god or hero: and tragedy was born; whose fruits it tasted with the blissful sense of its own creative force, but whose metaphysical basis it handed, all regardless, to the brain-racking speculation of the dramaturgists of our modern court-theatres.

Tragedy flourished for just so long as it was inspired by the spirit of the folk, and as this spirit was a veritably popular,—*i. e.*, a communal one. When the national brotherhood of the folk was shivered into fragments, when the common bond of its religion and primeval customs was pierced and severed by the sophist needles of the egoistic spirit of Athenian self-dissection, —then the folk's art work also ceased: then did the professors and the doctors of the literary guilds take heritage of the ruins of the fallen edifice, and delved among its beams and stones; to pry, to ponder, and to rearrange its members. With Aristophanian laughter, the folk relinquished to these learned insects the refuse of its meal, threw art upon one side for two millennia, and fashioned of its innermost necessity the history of the world; the while those scholars cobbled up their tiresome history of literature by order of the supreme court of Alexander.

The career of poetry, since the breaking-up of tragedy, and since her own departure from community with mimetic dance and tone, can be easily enough surveyed, despite the monstrous claims which she has raised. The lonely art of poetry prophesied no more: she no longer showed, but only described; she merely played the go-between, but gave naught from herself: she pieced together what true seers had uttered, but without the living bond of unity; she gave the catalogue of a picture gallery, but not the paintings. The wintry stem of speech, stripped of its summer wreath of sounding leaves, shrank to the withered, toneless signs of writing; instead of to the ear, it dumbly now addressed the eye; the poet's strain became a written dialect,—the poet's breath the penman's scrawl.

There sate she then, the lonely, sullen sister, behind her reeking lamp in the gloom of her silent chamber,—a female Faust, who, across the dust and mildew of her books, from out the uncontenting warp and woof of thought, from off the everlasting rack of fancies and of theories, yearned to step forth into actual life; with flesh and bone, and spick and span, to stand and go 'mid real men, a genuine human being. Alas! the poor sister had cast away her flesh and bone in over-pensive thoughtlessness; a disembodied soul, she could only now describe that which she lacked, as she watched it from her gloomy chamber, through the shut lattice of her thought, living and stirring its limbs amid the dear but distant world of sense: she could only picture, ever picture, the beloved of her youth; "so looked his face, so swayed his limbs, so glanced his eye, so rang the music of his voice." But all this picturing and describing, however deftly she attempted to raise it to a special art, how ingeniously soever she labored to fashion it by forms of speech and writing, for art's consoling recompense,—it still was but a vain, superfluous labor, the stilling of a need which only sprang from a failing that her own caprice had bred; it was nothing but the indigent wealth of alphabetical signs, distasteful in themselves, of some poor mute.

The sound and sturdy man, who stands before us clad in panoply of actual body, describes not what he wills and whom he loves; but *wills* and *loves*, and imparts to us by his artistic organs the joy of his own willing and his loving. This he does with the highest measure of directness in the enacted drama. But it is only to the straining for a shadowy substitute, an artificially objective method of description,—on which the art of Poetry, now loosed from all substantiality, must exercise her utmost powers of detail,—that we have to thank this million-membered mass of ponderous tomes, by which she still, at bottom, can only trumpet forth her utter helplessness. This whole impassable waste of stored-up literature—despite its million phrases and centuries of verse and prose, without once coming to the living Word—is nothing but the toilsome stammering of aphasia-smitten Thought, in its struggle for transmutation into natural articulate utterance.

This Thought—the highest and most conditioned faculty of artistic man—had cut itself adrift from fair warm Life, whose yearning had begotten and sustained it, as from a hemming, fettering bond that clogged its own unbounded freedom: so deemed the Christian yearning, and believed that it must break away from physical man, to spread in heaven's boundless æther to freest waywardness. But this very severance was to teach that thought and this desire how inseparable they were from human nature's being: how high soever they might soar into the air, they still could do this in the form of bodily man alone. In sooth, they could not take the carcass with them, bound as it was by laws of gravitation; but they managed to abstract a vapory emanation, which instinctively took on again the form and bearing of the human body. Thus hovered in the air the poet's Thought, like a human-outlined cloud that spread its shadow over actual, bodily earth-life, to which it evermore looked down; and into which it needs must long to shed itself, just as from earth alone it sucked its steaming vapors. The natural cloud dissolves itself in giving back to earth the conditions of its being: as fruitful rain it sinks upon the meadows, thrusts deep into the thirsty soil, and steeps the panting seeds of plants, which open then their rich luxuriance to the sunlight,— to that light which had erstwhile drawn the lowering cloud from out the fields. So should the poet's thought once more impregnate life; no longer spread its idle canopy of cloud 'twixt life and light.

What Poetry perceived from that high seat was after all but life: the higher did she raise herself, the more panoramic became her view; but the wider the connection in which she was now enabled to grasp the parts, the livelier arose in her the longing to fathom the depths of this great whole. Thus Poetry turned to science, to philosophy. To the struggle for a deeper knowledge of nature and of man, we stand indebted for that copious store of literature whose kernel is the poetic musing [*gedankenhaftes Dichten*] which speaks to us in human and in natural history, and in philosophy. The livelier do these sciences evince the longing for a genuine portrayal of the known, so much the nearer do they approach once more the artist's poetry; and the highest skill in picturing to the senses the phenomena of the universe must be ascribed to the noble works of this department of literature. But the deepest and most universal science can, at the last, know nothing else but life itself; and the substance and the sense of life are naught but man and nature. Science therefore can only gain her perfect confirmation in the work of art; in that work which takes both man and nature,—in so far as the latter attains her consciousness in man,—and shows them forth directly. Thus the consummation of Knowledge is its redemption into Poetry; into that poetic art, however, which marches hand in hand with her sister arts towards the perfect Art work;—and this art work is none other than the drama.

Drama is only conceivable as the fullest expression of a joint artistic longing to impart; while this longing, again, can only parley with a common receptivity. Where either of these factors lacks, the drama is no necessary, but merely an arbitrary, art product. Without these factors being at hand in actual life, the poet, in his striving for immediate presentation of the life that he had apprehended, sought to create the drama for himself alone; his creation therefore fell, perforce, a victim to all the faults of arbitrary dealing. Only in exact measure as his own proceeded from a common impulse, and could address itself to a common interest, do we find the necessary conditions of drama fulfilled,—since the time of its recall to life,—and the desire to answer those conditions rewarded with success.

A common impulse toward dramatic art work can only be at hand in those who actually enact the work of art in common; these, as we take it, are the fellowships of players. At the end of the Middle Ages, we see that those who later overmastered them and laid down their laws from the standpoint of absolute poetic art, have earned themselves the fame of destroying root-and-branch that which the man who sprang directly from such a fellowship, and made his poems for and with it, had created for the wonder of all time. From out the inmost, truest nature of the folk, *Shakespeare* created [*dichete*] for his fellow-players that drama which seems to us the more astounding as we see it rise by might of naked speech alone, without all help of kindred arts. One only help it had, the fancy of his audience, which turned with active sympathy to greet the inspiration of the poet's comrades. A genius the like of which was never heard, and a group of favoring chances ne'er repeated, in common made amends for what they lacked in common. Their joint creative force however was need; and where this shows its nature-bidden might, there man can compass even the impossible to satisfy it: from poverty grows plenty, from want an overflow; the boorish figure of the homely folk's-comedian takes on the bearing of a hero, the raucous clang of daily speech becomes the sounding music of the soul, the rude scaffolding of carpet-hung boards becomes a world-stage with all its wealth of scene. But if we take away this art work from its frame of fortunate conditions, if we set it down outside the realm of fertile force which bore it from the need of this one definite epoch, then do we see with sorrow that the poverty was still but poverty, the want but want; that Shakespeare was indeed the mightiest poet of all time, but his art work was not yet the work for every age; that not his genius, but the incomplete and merely will-ing, not yet *can*-ing, spirit of his age's art had made him but the Thespis of the tragedy of the future. In the same relation as stood the car of Thespis, in the brief time-span of the flowering of Athenian art, to the stage of Æschylus and Sophocles — so stands the stage of Shakespeare, in the unmeasured spaces of the flowering time of universal human art, to the theatre of the future. The deed of the one and only Shakespeare, which made of him a universal man, a very god, is yet but the kindred deed of the solitary Beethoven, who found the language of the artist-manhood of the future: only where these twain Prometheuses — Shakespeare and Beethoven — shall reach out hands to one another; where the marble creations of Phidias shall bestir themselves in flesh and blood; where the painted counterfeit of nature shall quit its cribbing-frame on the warm-life-blown framework of the future stage, — there first, in the communion of all his fellow-artists, will the poet also find redemption.

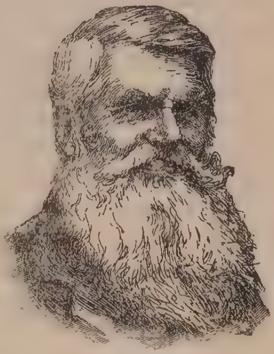
Translation of William Ashton Ellis.

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE

(1822–)

In 1858, Darwin, acting upon the advice of Sir Charles Lyell, was writing his views upon natural selection, which was a new term then for a theory never before advanced. One day he received from a friend far away in the Malay Archipelago, an essay entitled 'On the Tendency of Varieties to Depart Indefinitely from the Original Type,' which to his great surprise proved to be a skillful exposition of his own new theory. Darwin was too noble for petty jealousies. He gave ungrudging credit to the author, Mr. Wallace, and admitted the value of his paper. It was read before the Linnæan Society in July 1858, and later published with an essay by Darwin, which was a summary of his great work upon the 'Origin of Species,' as far as it was then elaborated. At the time neither attracted the attention it merited; for as Darwin wrote, the critics decided that what was true in them was old, and that what was not old was not true.

Darwin never had a more admiring disciple than Mr. Wallace, from those early days when their minds thus independently reached the same conclusion, to the time, thirty years later, when Wallace published his capable exposition entitled 'Darwinism.' In the mean time, the truths once rejected by scientists themselves had found common acceptation. By his brilliant essays in English reviews, Wallace did much to popularize the new methods of thought. Upon minor points he did not always agree with Darwin, but his faith in natural selection as a universal pass-key was far firmer than Darwin's own.



Alfred R. Wallace

Alfred Russel Wallace was born at Usk in Monmouthshire, January 8th, 1822, and received his education at the grammar school of Hertford. Later he was articled to an elder brother, an architect and land surveyor, and practiced these professions for some years. But Mr. Wallace had a great love of nature, combined with scientific tastes. It was a time when many brilliant minds in England and elsewhere were roused to an almost passionate investigation of the material world, and felt themselves on the edge of possible discoveries which might explain the universe. Wallace, stimulated by the works of Darwin, Hooker, Lyell, Tyndall, and others, gave up all other business for science in 1845.

Three years later he accompanied Mr. H. W. Bates upon an expedition to South America, an account of which he has given in his 'Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro.' For four years he lived on the banks of these rivers, studying all the physical conditions, and making valuable botanical and ornithological collections; much of which, however, with important notes, was unfortunately lost at sea. Many others had written of the beauty and luxuriance of equatorial forests, until to most readers they seemed an enchanted land of delight. Mr. Wallace described them in a spirit of rigorous truth. His readers felt not only the splendor of color, the lavishness of nature, but also the monotony of this unchanging maturity, and the hidden dangers, the wild beasts, the poisonous plants, and the strange stinging insects hardly distinguishable from the plants which harbored them. In this book, as in his 'Tropical Essays,' Mr. Wallace desired to present what was essentially tropical, and thus emphasize the characteristics of the region with their causes.

As he demonstrates in his volume upon 'Island Life,' the comparative isolation of islands results in an abundance of peculiar species, and renders them particularly valuable for scientific study. After leaving South America, Mr. Wallace visited the Malay Archipelago, going from island to island, and studying exhaustively geology and people, fauna and flora. When after eight years there he returned to England in 1862, he took back over eight thousand stuffed birds and ten thousand entomological specimens, including a number never before known, in addition to abundant notes,— material which it took several years to arrange and classify. The collections found a place in the English museums; and in 1869 he published 'The Malay Archipelago, the Land of the Orang-Utan and the Bird of Paradise,' which is still considered one of the most delightful books of travel ever written. He excels in showing us flowers and animals alive and at home. Interspersed with graphic stories of adventure are the results of his careful and scientific observation. His style is terse and simple, and his moderation in describing what is novel carries conviction of his truth.

Nothing appealed to Mr. Wallace more strongly than the cause and effect of individual variations in all animated beings. His trained eyes were as quick to note a departure from type as to classify and grasp relationships.

In 1868 the Royal Society of London bestowed its medal on him; and two years later he received the gold medal of the Geographical Society of Paris. Mr. Wallace has had a European reputation; and in 1876 his work 'On the Geographical Distribution of Animals' was issued simultaneously in French, German, and English.

Mr. Wallace is an optimist. Through his careful demonstration of the survival of the fittest runs the conviction that these organisms, so surrounded by perils, may be termed happy. The struggle for existence implies satisfaction in that it involves the exercise of healthy faculties. All forms lower than man escape mental anxiety. The element of dread eliminated, why should they not be happy?

For man, Mr. Wallace sees something else. He is a stanch believer in spiritualism as a science not yet mastered, but which eventually will explain man's higher nature. The Darwinian theory not only proves evolution «under the law of natural selection,» he says, «but also teaches us that we possess intellectual and moral faculties which could not have been so developed, but must have had another origin; and for this origin we can only find an adequate cause in the unseen universe of spirit.»

HOW THE RAJAH TOOK THE CENSUS

From ‹The Malay Archipelago›

The rajah of Lombok was a very wise man, and he showed his wisdom greatly in the way he took the census. For my readers must know that the chief revenues of the rajah were derived from a head-tax of rice, a small measure being paid annually by every man, woman, and child in the island. There was no doubt that every one paid this tax, for it was a very light one, and the land was fertile, and the people well off; but it had to pass through many hands before it reached the government storehouses. When the harvest was over, the villagers brought their rice to the kapala kampong, or head of the village: and no doubt he sometimes had compassion on the poor or sick, and passed over their short measure, and sometimes was obliged to grant a favor to those who had complaints against him; and then he must keep up his own dignity by having his granaries better filled than his neighbors, and so the rice that he took to the «waidono» that was over his district was generally a good deal less than it should have been. And all the «waidonos» had of course to take care of themselves, for they were all in debt; and it was so easy to take a little of the government rice, and there would still be plenty for the rajah. And the «gustis,» or princes, who received the rice from the waidonos, helped themselves likewise; and so when the harvest was all over, and the rice tribute was all brought in, the quantity was found to be less each year than the one before. Sickness in one district, and fevers in another, and failure of the crops in a third, were of course alleged as the cause of this falling-off; but when the rajah went to hunt at the foot of the great mountain, or went to visit a "gusti" on the other side of the island, he always saw the villages full of people, all looking well-fed and happy. And he noticed that the krisses of his chiefs and officers were getting handsomer and handsomer, and the handles that were of yellow wood were changed for ivory, and those of ivory were changed for gold, and diamonds and emeralds sparkled on many of them; and he knew very well which way the tribute-rice went. But as he could not prove it he kept silence, and resolved in his own heart some day to have a census taken, so that he might know the number of his people, and not be cheated out of more rice than was just and reasonable.

But the difficulty was how to get this census. He could not go himself into every village and every house, and count all the people; and if he ordered it to be done by the regular officers, they would quickly understand what it was for, and the census would be sure to agree exactly with the quantity of rice he got last year. It was evident therefore that to answer his purpose, no one must suspect why the census was taken; and to make sure of this, no one must know that there was any census taken at all. This was a very hard problem; and the rajah thought and thought, as hard as a Malay rajah can be expected to think, but could not solve it: and so he was very unhappy, and did nothing but smoke and chew betel with his favorite wife, and eat scarcely anything; and even when he went to the cock-fight did not seem to care whether his best birds won or lost. For several days he remained in this sad state, and all the court were afraid some evil eye had bewitched the rajah: and an unfortunate Irish captain, who had come in for a cargo of rice, and who squinted dreadfully, was very near being krissed; but being first brought to the royal presence, was graciously ordered to go on board, and remain there while his ship stayed in the port.

One morning, however, after about a week's continuance of this unaccountable melancholy, a welcome change took place: for the rajah sent to call together all the chiefs and priests and princes who were then in Mataram, his capital city; and when they were all assembled in anxious expectation, he thus addressed them:—

"For many days my heart has been very sick, and I knew not why; but now the trouble is cleared away, for I have had a dream. Last night the spirit of the 'Gunong Agong'—the great fire-mountain—appeared to me, and told me that I must go up to the top of the mountain. All of you may come with me to near the top; but then I must go up alone, and the great spirit will again appear to me, and will tell me what is of great importance to me, and to you, and to all the people of the island. Now go, all of you, and make this known through the island; and let every village furnish men to make clear a road for us to go through the forest and up the great mountain."

So the news was spread over the whole island that the rajah must go to meet the great spirit on the top of the mountain; and every village sent forth its men, and they cleared away the jungle, and made bridges over the mountain streams, and smoothed the rough places for the rajah's passage. And when they came to the steep and craggy rocks of the mountain, they sought out the best paths, sometimes along the bed of a torrent, sometimes along narrow ledges of the black rocks; in one place cutting down a tall tree so as to bridge across a chasm, in another constructing ladders to mount the smooth face of a precipice. The chiefs who superintended the work fixed upon the length of each day's journey beforehand according to the nature of the road; and chose pleasant places by the banks of clear streams and in the neighborhood of shady trees, where they built sheds and huts of bamboo, well thatched with the leaves of palm-trees, in which the rajah and his attendants might eat and sleep at the close of each day.

And when all was ready, the princes and priests and chief men came again to the rajah to tell him what had been done, and to ask him when he would go up the mountain. And he fixed a day, and ordered every man of rank and authority to accompany him, to do honor to the great spirit who had bid him undertake the journey, and to show how willingly they obeyed his commands. And then there was much preparation throughout the whole island. The best cattle were killed, and the meat salted and sun-dried, and abundance of red peppers and sweet potatoes were gathered, and the tall pinang-trees were climbed for the spicy betel-nut, the sirih-leaf was tied up in bundles, and every man filled his tobacco-pouch and lime-box to the brim, so that he might not want any of the materials for chewing the refreshing betel during the journey. And the stores of provisions were sent on a day in advance. And on the day before that appointed for starting, all the chiefs, both great and small, came to Mataram, the abode of the King, with their horses and their servants, and the bearers of their sirih-boxes, and their sleeping-mats, and their provisions. And they encamped under the tall waringin-trees that border all the roads about Mataram, and with blazing fires frighted away the ghouls and evil spirits that nightly haunt the gloomy avenues.

In the morning a great procession was formed to conduct the rajah to the mountain; and the royal princess and relations of the rajah mounted their black horses, whose tails swept the ground. They used no saddle or stirrups, but sat upon a cloth of gay colors; the bits were of silver, and the bridles of many-colored cords. The less important people were on small strong horses of various colors, well suited to a mountain journey; and all (even the rajah) were bare-legged to above the knee, wearing only the gay-colored cotton waist-cloth, a silk or cotton jacket, and a large handkerchief tastefully folded round the head. Every one was attended by one or two servants bearing his sirih and betel boxes, who were also mounted on ponies; and great numbers more had gone on in advance, or waited to bring up the rear. The men in authority were numbered by hundreds, and their followers by thousands, and all the island wondered what great thing would come of it.

For the first two days they went along good roads, and through many villages which were swept clean, and where bright cloths were hung out at the windows; and all the people, when the rajah came, squatted down upon the ground in respect, and every man riding got off his horse and squatted down also, and many joined the procession at every village. At the place where they stopped for the night, the people had placed stakes along each side of the roads in front of the houses. These were split crosswise at the top, and in the cleft were fastened little clay lamps, and between them were stuck the green leaves of palm-trees, which, dripping with the evening dew, gleamed prettily with the many twinkling lights. And few went to sleep that night till the morning hours; for every house held a knot of eager talkers, and much betel-nut was consumed, and endless were the conjectures what would come of it.

On the second day they left the last village behind them, and entered the wild country that surrounds the great mountain; and rested in the huts that had been prepared for them on the banks of a stream of cold and sparkling water. And the rajah's hunters, armed with long and heavy guns, went in search of deer and wild bulls in the surrounding woods, and brought home the meat of both in the early morning, and sent it on in advance to prepare the midday meal. On the third day they advanced as far as horses could go, and encamped at the foot of high rocks, among which narrow pathways only could be found to reach the mountain-top. And on the fourth morning, when the rajah set out, he was accompanied only by a small party of priests and princes, with their immediate attendants; and they toiled wearily up the rugged way, and sometimes were carried by their servants, till they passed up above the great trees, and then among the thorny bushes, and above them again on to the black and burnt rock of the highest part of the mountain.

And when they were near the summit the rajah ordered them all to halt, while he alone went to meet the great spirit on the very peak of the mountain. So he went on with two boys only, who carried his sirih and betel; and soon reached the top of the mountain among great rocks, on the edge of the great gulf whence issue forth continually smoke and vapor. And the rajah asked for sirih, and told the boys to sit down under a rock and look down the mountain, and not to move till he returned to them. And as they were tired, and the sun was warm and pleasant, and the rock sheltered them from the cold wind, the boys fell asleep. And the rajah went a little way on under another rock; and he was tired, and the sun was warm and pleasant, and he too fell asleep.

And those who were waiting for the rajah thought him a long time on the top of the mountain, and thought the great spirit must have much to say, or might perhaps want to keep him on the mountain always; or perhaps he had missed his way in coming down again. And they were debating whether they should go and search for him, when they saw him coming down with the two boys. And when he met them he looked very grave, but said nothing; and then all descended together, and the procession returned as it had come; and the rajah went to his palace, and the chiefs to their villages, and the people to their houses, to tell their wives and children all that had happened, and to wonder yet again what would come of it.

And three days afterward the rajah summoned the priests and the princes and the chief men of Mataram to hear what the great spirit had told him on the top of the mountain. And when they were all assembled, and the betel and sirih had been handed round, he told them what had happened. On the top of the mountain he had fallen into a trance, and the great spirit had appeared to him with a face like burnished gold, and had said, "O rajah! much plague and sickness and fevers are coming upon all the earth,—upon men, and upon horses, and upon cattle; but as you and your people have obeyed me and have come up to my great mountain, I will teach you how you and all the people of Lombok may escape this plague." And all waited anxiously, to hear how they were to be saved from so fearful a calamity. And after a short silence, the rajah spoke again, and told them that the great spirit had commanded that twelve sacred krisses should be made, and that to make them every village and every district must send a bundle of needles,—a needle for every head in the village. And when any grievous disease appeared in any village, one of the sacred krisses should be sent there: and if every house in that village had sent the right number of needles, the disease would immediately cease; but if the number of needles sent had not been exact, the kris would have no virtue.

So the princes and chiefs sent to all their villages and communicated the wonderful news: and all made haste to collect the needles with the greatest accuracy; for they feared that if but one were wanting, the whole village would suffer. So one by one, the head-men of the villages brought in their bundles of needles; those who were near Mataram came first, and those who were far off came last: and the rajah received them with his own hands, and put them away carefully in an inner chamber, in a camphor-wood chest whose hinges and clasps were of silver; and on every bundle was marked the name of the village, and the district from whence it came, so that it might be known that all had heard and obeyed the commands of the great spirit.

And when it was quite certain that every village had sent in its bundle, the rajah divided the needles into twelve equal parts, and ordered the best steel-worker in Mataram to bring his forge and his bellows and his hammers to the palace, and to make the twelve krisses under the rajah's eye, and in the sight of all men who chose to see it. And when they were finished, they were wrapped up in new silk, and put away carefully until they might be wanted.

Now the journey to the mountain was in the time of the east wind, when no rain falls in Lombok. And soon after the krisses were made it was the time of the rice harvest, and the chiefs of the districts and of villages brought in their tax to the rajah according to the number of heads in their villages. And to those that wanted but little of the full amount the rajah said nothing; but when those came who brought only half or a fourth part of what was strictly due, he said to them mildly, « The needles which you sent from your village were many more than came from such a one's village, yet your tribute is less than his: go back and see who it is that has not paid the tax.» And the next year the produce of the tax increased greatly, for they feared that the rajah might justly kill those who a second time kept back the right tribute. And so the rajah became very rich, and increased the number of his soldiers, and gave golden jewels to his wives, and bought fine black horses from the white-skinned Hollanders, and made great feasts when his children were born or were married; and none of the rajahs or sultans among the Malays were so great or so powerful as the rajah of Lombok.

And the twelve sacred krisses had great virtue. And when any sickness appeared in a village, one of them was sent for; and sometimes the sickness went away, and then the sacred kris was taken back again with great honor, and the head-men of the village came to tell the rajah of its miraculous power, and to thank him. And sometimes the sickness would not go away; and then everybody was convinced that there had been a mistake in the number of needles sent from that village, and therefore the sacred kris had no effect, and had to be taken back again by the head-men with heavy hearts, but still with all honor — for was not the fault their own?

LIFE IN THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO

From ‹The Malay Archipelago›

A Visit to the Chief (Orang Kaya) of a Borneo Village

In the evening the orang kaya came in full dress (a spangled velvet jacket, but no trousers), and invited me over to his house, where he gave me a seat of honor under a canopy of white calico and colored handkerchiefs. The great veranda was crowded with people; and large plates of rice, with cooked and fresh eggs, were placed on the ground as presents for me. A very old man then dressed himself in bright-colored clothes and many ornaments, and sitting at the door, murmured a long prayer or invocation, sprinkling rice from a basin he held in his hand, while several large gongs were loudly beaten, and a salute of muskets fired off. A large jar of rice wine, very sour, but with an agreeable flavor, was then handed round, and I asked to see some of their dances. These were, like most savage performances, very dull and ungraceful affairs; the men dressing themselves absurdly like women, and the girls making themselves as stiff and ridiculous as possible. All the time six or eight large Chinese gongs were being beaten by the vigorous arms of as many young men; producing such a deafening discord that I was glad to escape to the round-house, where I slept very comfortably, with half a dozen smoke-dried human skulls suspended over my head.

The Durion

The banks of the Saráwak River are everywhere covered with fruit-trees, which supply the Dyaks with a great deal of their food. The mangosteen, lansat, rambutan, jack, jambou, and blimbing, are all abundant; but most abundant and most esteemed is the durion,— a fruit about which very little is known in England, but which both by natives and Europeans in the Malay Archipelago is reckoned superior to all others. The old traveler Linschott, writing in 1599, says, « It is of such an excellent taste that it surpasses in flavor all the other fruits of the world, according to those who have tasted it.» And Doctor Paludanus adds, « This fruit is of a hot and humid nature. To those not used to it, it seems at first to smell like rotten onions, but immediately they have tasted it they prefer it to all other food. The natives give it honorable titles, exalt it, and make verses on it." When brought into a house the smell is often so offensive that some persons can never bear to taste it. This was my own case when I first tried it in Malacca; but in Borneo I found a ripe fruit on the ground, and eating it out of doors, I at once became a confirmed durion eater.

The durion grows on a large and lofty forest-tree, somewhat resembling an elm in its general character, but with a more smooth and scaly bark. The fruit is round or slightly oval, about the size of a large cocoanut, of a green color, and covered all over with short stout spines, the bases of which touch each other, and are consequently somewhat hexagonal, while the points are very strong and sharp. It is so completely armed that if the stalk is broken off, it is a difficult matter to lift one from the ground. The outer rind is so thick and tough that from whatever height it may fall, it is never broken. From the base to the apex five very faint lines may be traced, over which the spines arch a little; these are the sutures of the carpels, and show where the fruit may be divided with a heavy knife and a strong hand. The five cells are satiny-white within, and are each filled with an oval mass of cream-colored pulp, imbedded in which are two or three seeds about the size of chestnuts. This pulp is the eatable part, and its consistence and flavor are indescribable. A rich butter-like custard highly flavored with almonds gives the best general idea of it; but intermingled with it come wafts of flavor that call to mind cream cheese, onion sauce, brown sherry, and other incongruities. Then there is a rich glutinous smoothness in the pulp, which nothing else possesses, but which adds to its delicacy. It is neither acid, nor sweet, nor juicy, yet one feels the want of none of these qualities, for it is perfect as it is. It produces no nausea or other bad effect, and the more you eat of it the less you feel inclined to stop. In fact, to eat durions is a new sensation worth a voyage to the East to experience.

When the fruit is ripe it falls of itself; and the only way to eat durions in perfection is to get them as they fall, and the smell is then less overpowering. When unripe, it makes a very good vegetable if cooked, and it is also eaten by the Dyaks raw. In a good fruit season large quantities are preserved salted, in jars and bamboos, and kept the year round; when it acquires a most disgusting odor to Europeans, but the Dyaks appreciate it highly as a relish with their rice. There are in the forest two varieties of wild durions with much smaller fruits, one of them orange-colored inside; and these are probably the origin of the large and fine durions, which are never found wild. It would not, perhaps, be correct to say that the durion is the best of all fruits, because it cannot supply the place of the subacid juicy kinds, such as the orange, grape, mango, and mangosteen, whose refreshing and cooling qualities are so wholesome and grateful; but as producing a food of the most exquisite flavor it is unsurpassed. If I had to fix on two only as representing the perfection of the two classes, I should certainly choose the durion and the orange as the king and queen of fruits.

The durion is however sometimes dangerous. When the fruit begins to ripen, it falls daily and almost hourly, and accidents not unfrequently happen to persons walking or working under the trees. When the durion strikes a man in its fall, it produces a dreadful wound, the strong spines tearing open the flesh, while the blow itself is very heavy; but from this very circumstance death rarely ensues, the copious effusion of blood preventing the inflammation which might otherwise take place. A Dyak chief informed me that he had been struck down by a durion falling on his head, which he thought would certainly have caused his death, yet he recovered in a very short time.

Poets and moralists, judging from our English trees and fruits, have thought that small fruits always grew on lofty trees, so that their fall should be harmless to man, while the large ones trailed on the ground. Two of the largest and heaviest fruits known, however,— the Brazil-nut fruit (Bertholletia) and durion,— grow on lofty forest-trees, from which they fall as soon as they are ripe, and often wound or kill the native inhabitants. From this we may learn two things: first, not to draw general conclusions from a very partial view of nature; and secondly, that trees and fruits, no less than the varied productions of the animal kingdom, do not appear to be organized with exclusive reference to the use and convenience of man.

Cat's-Cradle in Borneo

I am inclined to rank the Dyaks above the Malays in mental capacity, while in moral character they are undoubtedly superior to them. They are simple and honest, and become the prey of the Malay and Chinese traders, who cheat and plunder them continually. They are more lively, more talkative, less secretive, and less suspicious, than the Malay, and are therefore pleasanter companions. The Malay boys have little inclination for active sports and games, which form quite a feature in the life of the Dyak youths; who, besides outdoor games of skill and strength, possess a variety of indoor amusements. One wet day in a Dyak house, when a number of boys and young men were about me, I thought to amuse them with something new, and showed them how to make «cat's-cradle» with a piece of string. Greatly to my surprise, they knew all about it, and more than I did; for after Charles and I had gone through all the changes we could make, one of the boys took it off my hand, and made several new figures which quite puzzled me. They then showed me a number of other tricks with pieces of string, which seemed a favorite amusement with them.

The Trial of a Thief in Java

One morning as I was preparing and arranging my specimens, I was told there was to be a trial; and presently four or five men came in and squatted down on a mat under the audience-shed in the court. The chief then came in with his clerk, and sat down opposite them. Each spoke in turn, telling his own tale; and then I found out that those who first entered were the prisoner, accuser, policemen, and witness, and that the prisoner was indicated solely by having a loose piece of cord twined round his wrists, but not tied. It was a case of robbery; and after the evidence was given and a few questions had been asked by the chief, the accused said a few words, and then sentence was pronounced, which was a fine. The parties then got up and walked away together, seeming quite friendly; and throughout there was nothing in the manner of any one present indicating passion or ill-feeling,—a very good illustration of the Malayan type of character.

Architecture in the Celebes

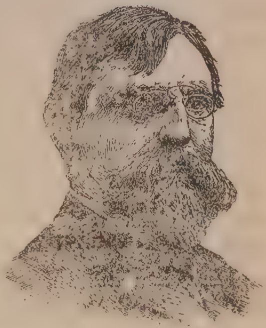
My house, like all bamboo structures in this country, was a leaning one, the strong westerly winds of the wet season having set all its posts out of the perpendicular to such a degree as to make me think it might some day possibly go over altogether. It is a remarkable thing that the natives of Celebes have not discovered the use of diagonal struts in strengthening buildings. I doubt if there is a native house in the country, two years old, and at all exposed to the wind, which stands upright; and no wonder, as they merely consist of posts and joists all placed upright or horizontal, and fastened rudely together with rattans. They may be seen in every stage of the process of tumbling down, from the first slight inclination to such a dangerous slope that it becomes a notice to quit to the occupiers.

The mechanical geniuses of the country have only discovered two ways of remedying the evil. One is, after it has commenced, to tie the house to a post in the ground on the windward side by a rattan or bamboo cable. The other is a preventive; but how they ever found it out and did not discover the true way is a mystery. This plan is to build the house in the usual way, but instead of having all the principal supports of straight posts, to have two or three of them chosen as crooked as possible. I had often noticed these crooked posts in houses, but imputed it to the scarcity of good straight timber; till one day I met some men carrying home a post shaped something like a dog's hind leg, and inquired of my native boy what they were going to do with such a piece of wood. « To make a post for a house,» said he. « But why don't they get a straight one? there are plenty here,» said I. « Oh,» replied he, « they prefer some like that in a house, because then it won't fall; » evidently imputing the effect to some occult property of crooked timber. A little consideration and a diagram will, however, show that the effect imputed to the crooked post may be really produced by it. A true square changes its figure readily into a rhomboid or oblique figure; but when one or two of the uprights are bent or sloping, and placed so as to oppose each other, the effect of a strut is produced, though in a rude and clumsy manner.

LEWIS WALLACE

(1827–)

General Lew Wallace is an American of whom his native State, Indiana, is justly proud. In the army and in diplomatic service he has an honorable record; as an author, one of his books has been, with the single exception of Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' the most popular romance written in the United States. 'Ben-Hur' is a striking production, known and enjoyed far beyond the limits of General Wallace's own land; and it has qualities sure to commend it to all who like fiction that with a historical setting, is dramatic and picturesque.



Lewis Wallace

Lewis Wallace is the son of David Wallace,—a distinguished Indiana lawyer who was once governor and twice lieutenant-governor of the State. Lewis was born in Brookville, on April 10th, 1827. The family homestead is at Crawfordsville, where General Wallace now resides. His family has fighting blood in it, several of his kin having been soldiers. Lew Wallace—he has taken the more familiar form of the Christian name—studied law and practiced it until the breaking out of the Civil War in April of 1861; when he was made adjutant-general on the governor's staff, organized the Eleventh Indiana, and was made its colonel. Good service at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, and other notable engagements, brought him promotion in turn to the rank of brigadier-general and major-general. He was a member of the commission appointed to try Lincoln's assassins, was given a diplomatic mission to Mexico in 1866, and made governor of New Mexico in 1880. From 1881 to 1885 he was United States minister to Turkey: it is interesting to note that 'Ben-Hur' was written before General Wallace went to that country, the verisimilitude being produced by careful study and the exercise of sympathetic imagination.

It will be seen from these biographical details that his life has been one of varied activity, such as to furnish a writer with excellent romantic material. His work shows what good use he has made of it. General Wallace's stories are vivid in foreign color, brisk with action, and exhibit the instinct for broadly effective scenes and strongly marked characters. Few fictionists offer so many episodes and situations that stand by themselves and lend themselves readily to quotation. His first work was 'The Fair God' in 1873, a story of the conquest of Mexico: a story in which, as in the case of 'Ben-Hur,' he made a novel before he came to live in the land in which his scenes were laid. Some years later (1880) came what is unquestionably his masterpiece, 'Ben-Hur,' which at once became and remained a very great favorite. The book was sold by the hundred thousand. As the sub-title indicates, it is a tale of the Christ. The Israelite hero of the romance is a well-conceived figure; his life is eventful, both in love and adventure, and his relation to the Savior affords the author the opportunity to delineate graphically the incoming religion in contrast with the faiths that came before it. The Oriental panorama moves before the reader with vivid reality. General Wallace deserves praise for this reproduction of the historic past, and his avoidance of the pitfall of mere archæological detail, into which writers like the German Ebers so often fall.

The only other work to be compared with 'Ben-Hur' is 'The Prince of India' (1893); another historical novel on a large scale, dealing with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks,— a theme finely adapted to the uses of romantic fiction. The story has vigorous character creation and some stirring scenes, while it is perhaps less successful in its construction as a whole. The prince, whose career is a variant on the Wandering Jew motive, is a splendid bit of character-making; and the mistake is in not keeping him throughout the story the dominant and central figure.

General Wallace has also written a 'Life of Ex-President Harrison'; and 'The Boyhood of Christ,' a biographical study. In 1889 he published 'Commodus,' a blank-verse tragedy which uses an incident in the Roman wars. This was republished in 1897 in a volume containing the Oriental narrative poem in blank verse, 'The Wooing of Malkatoon,' depicting with considerable grace and skill the love fortunes of a young Moslem chief.

General Wallace's wife, Susan Arnold Elston, a native of Crawfordsville, is a popular author; she has written a number of well-known stories and sketches, and her poem 'The Patter of Little Feet' has been widely quoted.

THE GALLEY FIGHT

From ‹Ben-Hur.› Copyright 1880, by Harper & Brothers

Every soul aboard, even the ship, awoke. Officers went to their quarters. The marines took arms, and were led out, looking in all respects like legionaries. Sheaves of arrows and armfuls of javelins were carried on deck. By the central stairs the oil-tanks and fire-balls were set ready for use. Additional lanterns were lighted. Buckets were filled with water. The rowers in relief assembled under guard in front of the chief. As Providence would have it, Ben-Hur was one of the latter. Overhead he heard the muffled noise of final preparations,—of the sailors furling sail, spreading the nettings, unslinging the machines, and hanging the armor of bull-hide over the side. Presently quiet settled about the galley again—quiet full of vague dread and expectation, which interpreted, means *ready*.

At a signal passed down from the deck, and communicated to the hortator by a petty officer stationed on the stairs, all at once the oars stopped.

What did it mean?

Of the hundred and twenty slaves chained to the benches, not one but asked himself the question. They were without incentive. Patriotism, love of honor, sense of duty, brought them no inspiration. They felt the thrill common to men rushed helpless and blind into danger. It may be supposed the dullest of them, poising his oar, thought of all that might happen, yet could promise himself nothing: for victory would but rivet his chains the firmer, while the chances of the ship were his; sinking or on fire, he was doomed to her fate.

Of the situation without, they might not ask. And who were the enemy? And what if they were friends, brethren, countrymen? The reader, carrying the suggestion forward, will see the necessity which governed the Roman when, in such emergencies, he locked the hapless wretches to their seats.

There was little time, however, for such thoughts with them. A sound like the rowing of galleys astern attracted Ben-Hur, and the Astræa rocked as if in the midst of countering waves. The idea of a fleet at hand broke upon him,—a fleet in manœuvre,—forming probably for attack. His blood started with the fancy.

Another signal order came down from deck. The oars dipped, and the galley started imperceptibly. No sound from without, none from within, yet each man in the cabin instinctively poised himself for a shock; the very ship seemed to catch the sense, and hold its breath, and go crouched tiger-like.

In such a situation, time is inappreciable; so that Ben-Hur could form no judgment of distance gone. At last there was a sound of trumpets on deck,—full, clear, long-blown. The chief beat the sounding-board until it rang; the rowers reached forward full length, and deepening the dip of their oars, pulled suddenly with all their united force. The galley, quivering in every timber, answered with a leap. Other trumpets joined in the clamor—all from the rear, none forward;—from the latter quarter only a rising sound of voices in tumult heard briefly. There was a mighty blow: the rowers in front of the chief's platform reeled, some of them fell; the ship bounded back, recovered, and rushed on more irresistibly than before. Shrill and high arose the shrieks of men in terror; over the blare of trumpets, and the grind and crash of the collision, they arose: then under his feet, under the keel, pounding, rumbling, breaking to pieces, drowning, Ben-Hur felt something overridden. The men about him looked at each other afraid. A shout of triumph from the deck,—the beak of the Roman had won! But who were they whom the sea had drunk? Of what tongue, from what land were they?

No pause, no stay! Forward rushed the Astræa; and as it went, some sailors ran down, and plunging the cotton balls into the oil-tanks, tossed them dripping to comrades at the head of the stairs: fire was to be added to other horrors of the combat.

Directly the galley heeled over so far that the oarsmen on the uppermost side with difficulty kept their benches. Again the hearty Roman cheer, and with it despairing shrieks. An opposing vessel, caught by the grappling-hooks of the great crane swinging from the prow, was being lifted into the air that it might be dropped and sunk.

The shouting increased on the right hand and on the left; before, behind, swelled an indescribable clamor. Occasionally there was a crash, followed by sudden peals of fright, telling of other ships ridden down, and their crews drowned in the vortexes.

Nor was the fight all on one side. Now and then a Roman in armor was borne down the hatchway, and laid bleeding, sometimes dying, on the floor.

Sometimes also puffs of smoke, blended with steam, and foul with the scent of roasting human flesh, poured into the cabin, turning the dimming light into yellow murk. Gasping for breath the while, Ben-Hur knew they were passing through the cloud of a ship on fire, and burning up with the rowers chained to the benches.

The Astræa all this time was in motion. Suddenly she stopped. The oars forward were dashed from the hands of the rowers, and the rowers from their benches. On deck, then, a furious trampling, and on the sides a grinding of ships afoul of each other. For the first time the beating of the gavel was lost in the uproar. Men sank on the floor in fear, or looked about seeking a hiding-place. In the midst of the panic a body plunged or was pitched headlong down the hatchway, falling near Ben-Hur. He beheld the half-naked carcass, a mass of hair blackening the face, and under it a shield of bull-hide and wicker-work,— a barbarian from the white-skinned nations of the North whom death had robbed of plunder and revenge. How came he there? An iron hand had snatched him from the opposing deck — no, the Astræa had been boarded! The Romans were fighting on their own deck? A chill smote the young Jew: Arrius was hard pressed,— he might be defending his own life. If he should be slain! God of Abraham forfend! The hopes and dreams so lately come, were they only hopes and dreams? Mother and sister — house — home — Holy Land — was he not to see them, after all? The tumult thundered above him: he looked around; in the cabin all was confusion: the rowers on the benches paralyzed; men running blindly hither and thither, only the chief on his seat imperturbable, vainly beating the sounding-board, and waiting the order of the tribune,— in the red murk illustrating the matchless discipline which had won the world.

The example had a good effect upon Ben-Hur. He controlled himself enough to think. Honor and duty bound the Roman to the platform; but what had he to do with such motives then? The bench was a thing to run from; while if he were to die a slave, who would be the better of the sacrifice? With him living was duty, if not honor. His life belonged to his people. They arose before him never more real: he saw them, their arms outstretched; he heard them imploring him. And he would go to them. He started — stopped. Alas! a Roman judgment held him in doom. While it endured, escape would be profitless. In the wide, wide earth there was no place in which he would be safe from the imperial demand; upon the land none, nor upon the sea. Whereas he required freedom according to the forms of law, so only could he abide in Judea and execute the filial purpose to which he would devote himself: in other land he would not live. Dear God! How he had waited and watched and prayed for such a release! And how it had been delayed! But at last he had seen it in the promise of the tribune. What else the great man's meaning? And if the benefactor so belated should now be slain! The dead come not back to redeem the pledges of the living. It should not be — Arrius should not die. At least, better perish with him than survive a galley-slave.

Once more Ben-Hur looked around. Upon the roof of the cabin the battle yet beat; against the sides the hostile vessels yet crushed and grinded. On the benches, the slaves struggled to tear loose from their chains, and finding their efforts vain, howled like madmen; the guards had gone up-stairs: discipline was out, panic in. No, the chief kept his chair, unchanged, calm as ever — except the gavel, weaponless. Vainly with his clangor he filled the lulls in the din. Ben-Hur gave him a last look, then broke away,— not in flight, but to seek the tribune.

A very short space lay between him and the stairs of the hatchway aft. He took it with a leap, and was half-way up the steps — up far enough to catch a glimpse of the sky blood-red with fire, of the ships alongside, of the sea covered with ships and wrecks, of the fight closed in about the pilot's quarter, the assailants many, the defenders few — when suddenly his foothold was knocked away, and he pitched backward. The floor, when he reached it, seemed to be lifting itself and breaking to pieces; then in a twinkling, the whole after-part of the hull broke asunder, and as if it had all the time been lying in wait, the sea, hissing and foaming, leaped in, and all became darkness and surging water to Ben-Hur.

It cannot be said that the young Jew helped himself in this stress. Besides his usual strength, he had the indefinite extra force which nature keeps in reserve for just such perils to life;

yet the darkness, and the whirl and roar of water, stupefied him. Even the holding his breath was involuntary.

The influx of the flood tossed him like a log forward into the cabin, where he would have drowned but for the refluence of the sinking motion. As it was, fathoms under the surface the hollow mass vomited him forth, and he arose along with the loosed débris. In the act of rising, he clutched something, and held to it. The time he was under seemed an age longer than it really was: at last he gained the top; with a great gasp he filled his lungs afresh, and tossing the water from his hair and eyes, climbed higher upon the plank he held, and looked about him.

Death had pursued him closely under the waves; he found it waiting for him when he was risen — waiting multiform.

Smoke lay upon the sea like a semi-transparent fog, through which here and there shone cores of intense brilliance. A quick intelligence told him that they were ships on fire. The battle was yet on; nor could he say who was victor. Within the radius of his vision now and then ships passed, shooting shadows athwart lights. Out of the dun clouds farther on he caught the crash of other ships colliding. The danger however was closer at hand. When the Astræa went down, her deck, it will be recollected, held her own crew, and the crews of the two galleys which had attacked her at the same time, all of whom were ingulfed. Many of them came to the surface together; and on the same plank or support of whatever kind continued the combat, begun possibly in the vortex fathoms down. Writhing and twisting in deadly embrace, sometimes striking with sword or javelin, they kept the sea around them in agitation,— at one place inky-black, at another aflame with fiery reflections. With their struggles he had nothing to do: they were all his enemies; not one of them but would kill him for the plank upon which he floated. He made haste to get away.

About that time he heard oars in quickest movement, and beheld a galley coming down upon him. The tall prow seemed doubly tall, and the red light playing upon its gilt and carving gave it an appearance of snaky life. Under its foot the water churned to flying foam.

He struck out, pushing the plank, which was very broad and unmanageable. Seconds were precious — half a second might save or lose him. In the crisis of the effort, up from the sea, within arm's reach, a helmet shot like a gleam of gold. Next came two hands with fingers extended,—large hands were they, and strong;—their hold once fixed might not be loosed. Ben-Hur swerved from them appalled. Up rose the helmet and the head it incased; then two arms, which began to beat the water wildly; the head turned back, and gave the face to the light. The mouth gaping wide; the eyes open but sightless, and the bloodless pallor of a drowning man,—never anything more ghastly! Yet he gave a cry of joy at the sight; and as the face was going under again, he caught the sufferer by the chain which passed from the helmet beneath the chin, and drew him to the plank.

The man was Arrius, the tribune.

For a while the water foamed and eddied violently about Ben-Hur, taxing all his strength to hold to the support, and at the same time to keep the Roman's head above the surface. The galley had passed, leaving the two barely outside the stroke of its oars. Right through the floating men, over heads helmeted as well as heads bare, she drove; in her wake nothing but the sea sparkling with fire. A muffled crash, succeeded by a great outcry, made the rescuer look again from his charge. A certain savage pleasure touched his heart. The Astræa was avenged.

After that the battle moved on. Resistance turned to flight. But who were the victors? Ben-Hur was sensible how much his freedom and the life of the tribune depended upon that event. He pushed the plank under the latter until it floated him, after which all his care was to keep him there. The dawn came slowly. He watched its growing hopefully, yet sometimes afraid. Would it bring the Romans or the pirates? If the pirates, his charge was lost.

At last morning broke in full, the air without a breath. Off to the left he saw the land, too far to think of attempting to make it. Here and there men were adrift like himself. In spots the sea was blackened by charred and sometimes smoking fragments. A galley up a long way was lying to with a torn sail hanging from the tilted yard, and the oars all idle. Still farther away he could discern moving specks, which he thought might be ships in flight or pursuit, or they might be white birds a-wing.

An hour passed thus. His anxiety increased. If relief came not speedily, Arrius would die. Sometimes he seemed already dead, he lay so still. He took the helmet off, and then, with greater difficulty, the cuirass; the heart he found fluttering. He took hope at the sign, and held on. There was nothing to do but wait, and after the manner of his people, pray.

The throes of recovery from drowning are more painful than the drowning. These Arrius passed through; and at length, to Ben-Hur's delight, reached the point of speech.

Gradually, from incoherent questions as to where he was, and by whom and how he had been saved, he reverted to the battle. The doubt of the victory stimulated his faculties to full return, a result aided not a little by a long rest — such as could be had on their frail support. After a while he became talkative.

«Our rescue, I see, depends upon the result of the fight. I see also what thou hast done for me. To speak fairly, thou hast saved my life at the risk of thy own. I make the acknowledgment broadly; and whatever cometh, thou hast my thanks. More than that, if fortune doth but serve me kindly, and we get well out of this peril, I will do thee such favor as becometh a Roman who hath power and opportunity to prove his gratitude. Yet — yet it is to be seen if, with thy good intent, thou hast really done me a kindness: or rather, speaking to thy good will,» — he hesitated, — «I would exact of thee a promise to do me, in a certain event, the greatest favor one man can do another; and of that let me have thy pledge now.»

«If the thing be not forbidden, I will do it,» Ben-Hur replied.

Arrius rested again.

«Art thou indeed a son of Hur, the Jew?» he next asked.

«It is as I have said.»

«I knew thy father —»

Judah drew himself nearer, for the tribune's voice was weak; he drew nearer, and listened eagerly; at last he thought to hear of home.

«I knew him, and loved him,» Arrius continued.

There was another pause, during which something diverted the speaker's thought.

«It cannot be,» he proceeded, «that thou, a son of his, hast not heard of Cato and Brutus. They were very great men, and never as great as in death. In their dying, they left this law: A Roman may not survive his good fortune. Art thou listening?"

"I hear."

"It is a custom of gentlemen in Rome to wear a ring. There is one on my hand. Take it now."

He held the hand to Judah, who did as he asked.

"Now put it on thine own hand."

Ben-Hur did so.

"The trinket hath its uses," said Arrius next. "I have property and money. I am accounted rich even in Rome. I have no family. Show the ring to my freedman, who hath control in my absence: you will find him in a villa near Misenum. Tell him how it came to thee, and ask anything, or all he may have: he will not refuse the demand. If I live, I will do better by thee. I will make thee free, and restore thee to thy home and people; or thou mayst give thyself to the pursuit that pleaseth thee most. Dost thou hear?"

"I could not choose but hear."

"Then pledge me. By the gods —"

"Nay, good tribune, I am a Jew."

"By thy God, then, or in the form most sacred to those of thy faith, pledge me to do what I tell thee now, and as I tell thee: I am waiting; let me have thy promise."

"Noble Arrius, I am warned by thy manner to expect something of gravest concern. Tell me thy wish first."

"Wilt thou promise then?"

"That were to give the pledge, and — Blessed be the God of my fathers! yonder cometh a ship!"

"In what direction?"

"From the north."

"Canst thou tell her nationality by outward signs?"

"No. My service hath been at the oars."

"Hath she a flag?"

"I cannot see one."

Arrius remained quiet some time, apparently in deep reflection.

"Does the ship hold this way yet?" he at length asked.

"Still this way."

"Look for the flag now."

"She hath none."

"Nor any other sign?"

"She hath a sail set, and is of three banks, and cometh swiftly,—that is all I can say of her."

"A Roman in triumph would have out many flags. She must be an enemy. Hear now," said Arrius, becoming grave again, "hear, while yet I may speak. If the galley be a pirate, thy life is safe: they may not give thee freedom; they may put thee to the oar again: but they will not kill thee. On the other hand, I—"

The tribune faltered.

"*Perpol!*" he continued resolutely. "I am too old to submit to dishonor. In Rome, let them tell how Quintus Arrius, as became a Roman tribune, went down with his ship in the midst of the foe. This is what I would have thee do. If the galley prove a pirate, push me from the plank and drown me. Dost thou hear? Swear thou wilt do it."

"I will not swear," said Ben-Hur, firmly; "neither will I do the deed. The Law, which is to me most binding, O tribune, would make me answerable for thy life. Take back the ring"—he took the seal from his finger; "take it back, and all thy promises of favor in the event of delivery from this peril. The judgment which sent me to the oar for life made me a slave, yet I am not a slave; no more am I thy freedman. I am a son of Israel, and this moment, at least, my own master. Take back the ring."

Arrius remained passive.

"Thou wilt not?" Judah continued. "Not in anger, then, nor in any despite, but to free myself from a hateful obligation, I will give thy gift to the sea. See, O tribune!"

He tossed the ring away. Arrius heard the splash where it struck and sank, though he did not look.

"Thou hast done a foolish thing," he said; "foolish for one placed as thou art. I am not dependent upon thee for death. Life is a thread I can break without thy help; and if I do, what will become of thee? Men determined on death prefer it at the hands of others, for the reason that the soul which Plato giveth us is rebellious at the thought of self-destruction; that is all. If the ship be a pirate, I will escape from the world. My mind is fixed. I am a Roman. Success and honor are all in all. Yet I would have served thee; thou wouldst not. The ring was the only witness of my will available in this situation. We are both lost. I will die regretting the victory and glory wrested from me; thou wilt live to die a little later, mourning the pious duties undone because of this folly. I pity thee."

Ben-Hur saw the consequences of his act more distinctly than before, yet he did not falter.

"In the three years of my servitude, O tribune, thou wert the first to look upon me kindly. No, no! There was another." The voice dropped, the eyes became humid, and he saw plainly as if it were then before him the face of the boy who helped him to a drink by the old well at Nazareth. "At least," he proceeded, "thou wert the first to ask me who I was: and if, when I reached out and caught thee, blind and sinking the last time, I too had thought of the many ways in which thou couldst be useful to me in my wretchedness, still the act was not all selfish; this I pray you to believe. Moreover, seeing as God giveth me to now, the ends I dream of are to be wrought by fair means alone. As a thing of conscience, I would rather die with thee than be thy slayer. My mind is firmly set as thine: though thou wert to offer me all Rome, O tribune, and it belonged to thee to make the gift good, I would not kill thee. Thy Cato and Brutus were as little children compared to the Hebrew whose law a Jew must obey."

"But my request. Hast—"

"Thy command would be of more weight, and that would not move me. I have said."

Both became silent, waiting. Ben-Hur looked often at the coming ship. Arrius rested with closed eyes, indifferent.

"Art thou sure she is an enemy?" Ben-Hur asked.

"I think so," was the reply.

"She stops, and puts a boat over the side."

"Dost thou see her flag?"

"Is there no other sign by which she may be known if Roman?"

"If Roman, she hath a helmet over the mast's top."

"Then be of cheer,—I see the helmet."

Still Arrius was not assured.

"The men in the small boat are taking in the people afloat. Pirates are not humane."

"They may need rowers," Arrius replied; recurring possibly to times when he had made rescues for the purpose.

Ben-Hur was very watchful of the actions of the strangers.

"The ship moves off," he said.

"Whither?"

"Over on our right there is a galley which I take to be deserted. The new-comer heads towards it. Now she is alongside. Now she is sending men aboard."

Then Arrius opened his eyes and threw off his calm.

"Thank thou thy God," he said to Ben-Hur, after a look at the galleys,—"thank thou thy God, as I do my many gods. A pirate would sink, not save, yon ship. By the act and the helmet on the mast I know a Roman. The victory is mine. Fortune hath not deserted me. We are saved. Wave thy hand; call to them; bring them quickly. I shall be duumvir—and thou! I knew thy father, and loved him. He was a prince indeed. He taught me a Jew was not a barbarian. I will take thee with me. I will make thee my son. Give thy God thanks, and call the sailors. Haste! The pursuit must be kept. Not a robber shall escape. Hasten them!"

Judah raised himself upon the plank, and waved his hand, and called with all his might; at last he drew the attention of the sailors in the small boat, and they were speedily taken up.

Arrius was received on the galley with all the honors due a hero so the favorite of Fortune. Upon a couch on the deck he heard the particulars of the conclusion of the fight. When the survivors afloat upon the water were all saved and the prize secured, he spread his flag of commandant anew, and hurried northward to rejoin the fleet and perfect the victory. In due time the fifty vessels coming down the channel closed in upon the fugitive pirates, and crushed them utterly: not one escaped. To swell the tribune's glory, twenty galleys of the enemy were captured.

Upon his return from the cruise, Arrius had warm welcome on the mole at Misenum. The young man attending him very early attracted the attention of his friends there; and to their questions as to who he was, the tribune proceeded in the most affectionate manner to tell the story of his rescue and introduce the stranger, omitting carefully all that pertained to the latter's previous history. At the end of the narrative he called Ben-Hur to him, and said, with a hand resting affectionately upon his shoulder: —

"Good friends, this is my son and heir, who, as he is to take my property,— if it be the will of the gods that I leave any,— shall be known to you by my name. I pray you all to love him as you love me."

Speedily as opportunity permitted, the adoption was formally perfected. And in such manner the brave Roman kept his faith with Ben-Hur, giving him happy introduction into the imperial world. The month succeeding Arrius's return, the *armilustrium* was celebrated with the utmost magnificence in the theatre of Scaurus. One side of the structure was taken up with military trophies; among which by far the most conspicuous and most admired were twenty prows, complemented by their corresponding aplustra, cut bodily from as many galleys; and over them, so as to be legible to the eighty thousand spectators in the seats, was this inscription: —

TAKEN FROM THE PIRATES IN THE GULF OF EURIPUS
BY
QUINTUS ARRIUS
DUUMVIR

THE CHARIOT RACE

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The divine last touch in perfecting the beautiful is animation. Can we accept the saying, then these latter days, so tame in pastime and dull in sports, have scarcely anything to compare to the spectacle offered by the six contestants. Let the reader try to fancy it: — let him first look down upon the arena, and see it glistening in its frame of dull-gray granite walls: let him then, in this perfect field, see the chariots, light of wheel, very graceful, and ornate as paint and burnishing can make them — Messala's rich with ivory and gold: let him see the drivers, erect and statuesque, undisturbed by the motion of the cars, their limbs naked, and fresh and ruddy with the healthful polish of the baths — in their right hands goads, suggestive of torture dreadful to the thought; in their left hands, held in careful separation, and high that they may not interfere with view of the steeds, the reins passing taut from the fore ends of the carriage poles: let him see the fours, chosen for beauty as well as speed: let him see them in magnificent action, their masters not more conscious of the situation and all that is asked and hoped from them — their heads tossing, nostrils in play, now distent, now contracted; limbs too dainty for the sand which they touch but to spurn; limbs slender, yet with impact crushing as hammers; every muscle of the rounded bodies instinct with glorious life, swelling, diminishing, justifying the world in taking from them its ultimate measure of force: finally, along with chariots, drivers, horses, let the reader see the accompanying shadows fly: — and with such distinctness as the picture comes, he may share the satisfaction and deeper pleasure of those to whom it was a thrilling fact, not a feeble fancy. Every age has its plenty of sorrows: Heaven help where there are no pleasures!

The competitors having started each on the shortest line for the position next the wall, yielding would be like giving up the race; and who dared yield? It is not in common nature to change a purpose in mid-career; and the cries of encouragement from the balcony were indistinguishable and indescribable, — a roar which had the same effect upon all the drivers.

The fours neared the rope together. Then the trumpeter by the editor's side blew a signal vigorously. Twenty feet away it was not heard. Seeing the action, however, the judges dropped the rope, — and not an instant too soon, for the hoof of one of Messala's horses struck it as it fell. Nothing daunted, the Roman shook out his long lash, loosed the reins, leaned forward, and with a triumphant shout took the wall.

«Jove with us! Jove with us!» yelled all the Roman faction, in a frenzy of delight.

As Messala turned in, the bronze lion's head at the end of his axle caught the fore-leg of the Athenian's right-hand trace-mate, flinging the brute over against its yokefellow. Both staggered, struggled, and lost their headway. The ushers had their will, at least in part. The thousands held their breath with horror; only up where the consul sat was there shouting.

«Jove with us!» screamed Drusus frantically.

«He wins! Jove with us!» answered his associates, seeing Messala speed on.

Tablet in hand, Sanballat turned to them; a crash from the course below stopped his speech, and he could not but look that way.

Messala having passed, the Corinthian was the only contestant on the Athenian's right, and to that side the latter tried to turn his broken four; and then, as ill-fortune would have it, the wheel of the Byzantine, who was next on the left, struck the tail-piece of his chariot, knocking his feet from under him. There was a crash, a scream of rage and fear, and the unfortunate Cleanthes fell under the hoofs of his own steeds: a terrible sight, against which Esther covered her eyes.

On swept the Corinthian, on the Byzantine, on the Sidonian.

Sanballat looked for Ben-Hur, and turned again to Drusus and his coterie.

«A hundred sestertii on the Jew!» he cried.

«Taken!» answered Drusus.

«Another hundred on the Jew!» shouted Sanballat.

Nobody appeared to hear him. He called again; the situation below was too absorbing, and they were too busy shouting, «Messala! Messala! Jove with us!»

When the Jewess ventured to look again, a party of workmen were removing the horses and broken car; another party were taking off the man himself; and every bench upon which there was a Greek was vocal with execrations and prayers for vengeance. Suddenly she dropped her hands: Ben-Hur, unhurt, was to the front, coursing freely forward along with the Roman! Behind them, in a group, followed the Sidonian, the Corinthian, and the Byzantine.

The race was on; the souls of the racers were in it; over them bent the myriads.

When the dash for position began, Ben-Hur, as we have seen, was on the extreme left of the six. For a moment, like the others, he was half blinded by the light in the arena; yet he managed to catch sight of his antagonists and divine their purpose. At Messala, who was more than an antagonist to him, he gave one searching look. The air of passionless hauteur characteristic of the fine patrician face was there as of old, and so was the Italian beauty, which the helmet rather increased; but more —it may have been a jealous fancy, or the effect of the brassy shadow in which the features were at the moment cast, still the

Israelite thought he saw the soul of the man as through a glass, darkly,—cruel, cunning, desperate; not so excited as determined,—a soul in a tension of watchfulness and fierce resolve.

In a time not longer than was required to turn to his four again, Ben-Hur felt his own resolution harden to a like temper. At whatever cost, at all hazards, he would humble this enemy! Prize, friends, wagers, honor—everything that can be thought of as a possible interest in the race was lost in the one deliberate purpose. Regard for life even should not hold him back. Yet there was no passion on his part; no blinding rush of heated blood from heart to brain and back again; no impulse to fling himself upon Fortune: he did not believe in Fortune; far otherwise. He had his plan, and confiding in himself, he settled to the task, never more observant, never more capable. The air about him seemed aglow with a renewed and perfect transparency.

When not half-way across the arena, he saw that Messala's rush would, if there was no collision, and the rope fell, give him the wall; that the rope would fall, he ceased as soon to doubt: and further, it came to him, a sudden flash-like insight, that Messala knew it was to be let drop at the last moment (prearrangement with the editor could safely reach that point in the contest); and it suggested, what more Roman-like than for the official to lend himself to a countryman, who, besides being so popular, had also so much at stake? There could be no other accounting for the confidence with which Messala pushed his four forward the instant his competitors were prudentially checking their fours in front of the obstruction,—no other except madness.

It is one thing to see a necessity, and another to act upon it. Ben-Hur yielded the wall for the time.

The rope fell, and all the fours but his sprang into the course under urgency of voice and lash. He drew head to the right, and with all the speed of his Arabs, darted across the trails of his opponents, the angle of movement being such as to lose the least time and gain the greatest possible advance. So while the spectators were shivering at the Athenian's mishap, and the Sidonian, Byzantine, and Corinthian were striving, with such skill as they possessed, to avoid involvement in the ruin, Ben-Hur swept around and took the course neck and neck with Messala, though on the outside. The marvelous skill shown in making the change thus from the extreme left across to the right without appreciable loss did not fail the sharp eyes upon the benches;

the Circus seemed to rock and rock again with prolonged applause. Then Esther clasped her hands in glad surprise; then Sanballat, smiling, offered his hundred sestertii a second time without a taker; and then the Romans began to doubt, thinking Messala might have found an equal, if not a master, and that in an Israelite!

And now, racing together side by side, a narrow interval between them, the two neared the second goal.

The pedestal of the three pillars there, viewed from the west, was a stone wall in the form of a half-circle, around which the course and opposite balcony were bent in exact parallelism. Making this turn was considered in all respects the most telling test of a charioteer; it was in fact the very feat in which Orestes failed. As an involuntary admission of interest on the part of the spectators, a hush fell over all the Circus; so that for the first time in the race the rattle and clang of the cars plunging after the tugging steeds were distinctly heard. Then, it would seem, Messala observed Ben-Hur, and recognized him; and at once the audacity of the man flamed out in an astonishing manner.

"Down Eros, up Mars!" he shouted, whirling his lash with practiced hand; "Down Eros, up Mars!" he repeated, and caught the well-doing Arabs of Ben-Hur a cut the like of which they had never known.

The blow was seen in every quarter, and the amazement was universal. The silence deepened; up on the benches behind the consul the boldest held his breath, waiting for the outcome. Only a moment thus: then involuntarily, down from the balcony, as thunder falls, burst the indignant cry of the people.

The four sprang forward affrighted. No hand had ever been laid upon them except in love; they had been nurtured ever so tenderly: and as they grew, their confidence in man became a lesson to men beautiful to see. What should such dainty natures do under such indignity but leap as from death?

Forward they sprang as with one impulse, and forward leaped the car. Past question, every experience is serviceable to us. Where got Ben-Hur the large hand and mighty grip which helped him now so well? Where but from the oar with which so long he fought the sea? And what was this spring of the floor under his feet to the dizzy, eccentric lurch with which in the old time the trembling ship yielded to the beat of staggering billows, drunk with their power? So he kept his place, and gave the four free rein, and called to them in soothing voice, trying merely to guide them round the dangerous turn; and before the fever of the people began to abate, he had back the mastery. Nor that only: on approaching the first goal, he was again side by side with Messala, bearing with him the sympathy and admiration of every one not a Roman. So clearly was the feeling shown, so vigorous its manifestation, that Messala, with all his boldness, felt it unsafe to trifle further.

As the cars whirled round the goal, Esther caught sight of Ben-Hur's face,— a little pale, a little higher raised, otherwise calm, even placid.

Immediately a man climbed on the entablature at the west end of the division wall, and took down one of the conical wooden balls. A dolphin on the east entablature was taken down at the same time.

In like manner, the second ball and second dolphin disappeared.

And then the third ball and third dolphin.

Three rounds concluded: still Messala held the inside position; still Ben-Hur moved with him side by side; still the other competitors followed as before. The contest began to have the appearance of one of the double races which became so popular in Rome during the later Cæsarean period: Messala and Ben-Hur in the first, the Corinthian, Sidonian, and Byzantine in the second. Meantime the ushers succeeded in returning the multitude to their seats, though the clamor continued to run the rounds,— keeping, as it were, even pace with the rivals in the course below.

In the fifth round the Sidonian succeeded in getting a place outside Ben-Hur, but lost it directly.

The sixth round was entered upon without change of relative position.

Gradually the speed had been quickened; gradually the blood of the competitors warmed with the work. Men and beasts seemed to know alike that the final crisis was near, bringing the time for the winner to assert himself.

The interest, which from the beginning had centred chiefly in the struggle between the Roman and the Jew, with an intense and general sympathy for the latter, was fast changing to anxiety on his account. On all the benches the spectators bent forward motionless, except as their faces turned following the contestants. Ilderim quitted combing his beard, and Esther forgot her fears.

"A hundred sestertii on the Jew!" cried Sanballat to the Romans under the consul's awning.

There was no reply.

"A talent — or five talents, or ten: choose ye!"

He shook his tablets at them defiantly.

"I will take thy sestertii," answered a Roman youth, preparing to write.

"Do not so," interposed a friend.

"Why?"

"Messala hath reached his utmost speed. See him lean over his chariot-rim, the reins loose as flying ribbons. Look then at the Jew."

The first one looked.

"By Hercules!" he replied, his countenance falling. "The dog throws all his weight on the bits. I see, I see! If the gods help not our friend, he will be run away with by the Israelite. No, not yet. Look! Jove with us, Jove with us!"

The cry, swelled by every Latin tongue, shook the *velaria* over the consul's head.

If it were true that Messala had attained his utmost speed, the effort was with effect: slowly but certainly he was beginning to forge ahead. His horses were running with their heads low down; from the balcony their bodies appeared actually to skim the earth; their nostrils showed blood-red in expansion; their eyes seemed straining in their sockets. Certainly the good steeds were doing their best! How long could they keep the pace? It was but the commencement of the sixth round. On they dashed. As they neared the second goal, Ben-Hur turned in behind the Roman's car.

The joy of the Messala faction reached its bound: they screamed and howled, and tossed their colors; and Sanballat filled his tablets with wagers of their tendering.

Malluch, in the lower galley over the Gate of Triumph, found it hard to keep his cheer. He had cherished the vague hint dropped to him by Ben-Hur of something to happen in the turning of the western pillars. It was the fifth round, yet the something had not come: and he had said to himself, the sixth will bring it; but, lo! Ben-Hur was hardly holding a place at the tail of his enemy's car.

Over in the east end, Simonides's party held their peace. The merchant's head was bent low. Ilderim tugged at his beard, and dropped his brows till there was nothing of his eyes but an occasional sparkle of light. Esther scarcely breathed. Iras alone appeared glad.

Along the home-stretch — sixth round — Messala leading, next him Ben-Hur, and so close it was the old story: —

> «First flew Eumelus on Pheretian steeds;
> With those of Tros bold Diomed succeeds:
> Close on Eumelus's back they puff the wind,
> And seem just mounting on his car behind;
> Full on his neck he feels the sultry breeze,
> And hovering o'er, their stretching shadow sees.»

Thus to the first goal, and round it. Messala, fearful of losing his place, hugged the stony wall with perilous clasp; a foot to the left, and he had been dashed to pieces: yet when the turn was finished, no man, looking at the wheel-tracks of the two cars, could have said, Here went Messala, there the Jew. They left but one trace behind them.

As they whirled by, Esther saw Ben-Hur's face again, and it was whiter than before.

Simonides, shrewder than Esther, said to Ilderim the moment the rivals turned into the course, «I am no judge, good sheik, if Ben-Hur be not about to execute some design. His face hath that look.»

To which Ilderim answered, «Saw you how clean they were, and fresh? By the splendor of God, friend, they have not been running! But now watch!»

One ball and one dolphin remained on the entablatures; and all the people drew a long breath, for the beginning of the end was at hand.

First the Sidonian gave the scourge to his four; and smarting with fear and pain, they dashed desperately forward, promising for a brief time to go to the front. The effort ended in promise. Next, the Byzantine and Corinthian each made the trial with like result, after which they were practically out of the race. Thereupon, with a readiness perfectly explicable, all the factions except the Romans joined hope in Ben-Hur, and openly indulged their feeling.

"Ben-Hur! Ben-Hur!" they shouted, and the blent voices of the many rolled overwhelmingly against the consular stand.

From the benches above him as he passed, the favor descended in fierce injunctions.

"Speed thee, Jew!"

"Take the wall now!"

"On! loose the Arabs! Give them rein and scourge!"

"Let him not have the turn on thee again. Now or never!"

Over the balustrade they stooped low, stretching their hands imploringly to him.

Either he did not hear, or could not do better, for half-way round the course and he was still following; at the second goal even, still no change!

And now, to make the turn, Messala began to draw in his left-hand steeds,—an act which necessarily slackened their speed. His spirit was high; more than one altar was richer of his vows; the Roman genius was still president. On the three pillars only six hundred feet away were fame, increase of fortune, promotions, and a triumph ineffably sweetened by hate, all in store for him! That moment Malluch, in the gallery, saw Ben-Hur lean forward over his Arabs, and give them the reins. Out flew the many-folded lash in his hand: over the backs of the startled steeds it writhed and hissed, and hissed and writhed again and again; and though it fell not, there were both sting and menace in its quick report: and as the man passed thus from quiet to resistless action, his face suffused, his eyes gleaming, along the reins he seemed to flash his will; and instantly not one, but the four as one, answered with a leap that landed them alongside the Roman's car. Messala, on the perilous edge of the goal, heard, but dared not look to see what the awakening portended. From the people he received no sign. Above the noises of the race there was but one voice, and that was Ben-Hur's. In the old Aramaic, as the sheik himself, he called to the Arabs:—

"On, Atair! On, Rigel! What, Antares! dost thou linger now? Good horse—oho, Aldebaran! I hear them singing in the tents. I hear the children singing, and the women—singing of the stars, of Atair, Antares, Rigel, Aldebaran, victory!—and the song will never end. Well done! Home to-morrow, under the black tent — home! On, Antares! The tribe is waiting for us, and the master is waiting! 'Tis done! 'tis done! Ha, ha! We have overthrown the proud. The hand that smote us is in the dust. Ours the glory! Ha, ha! — steady! The work is done — soho! Rest!"

There had never been anything of the kind more simple; seldom anything so instantaneous.

At the moment chosen for the dash, Messala was moving in a circle round the goal. To pass him, Ben-Hur had to cross the track, and good strategy required the movement to be in a forward direction,— that is, on a like circle limited to the least possible increase. The thousands on the benches understood it all: they saw the signal given — the magnificent response; the four close outside Messala's outer wheel, Ben-Hur's inner wheel behind the other's car — all this they saw. Then they heard a crash loud enough to send a thrill through the Circus, and quicker than thought, out over the course a spray of shining white and yellow flinders flew. Down on its right side toppled the bed of the Roman's chariot. There was a rebound as of the axle hitting the hard earth; another and another; then the car went to pieces, and Messala, entangled in the reins, pitched forward headlong.

To increase the horror of the sight by making death certain, the Sidonian, who had the wall next behind, could not stop or turn out. Into the wreck full speed he drove; then over the Roman, and into the latter's four, all mad with fear. Presently, out of the turmoil, the fighting of horses, the resound of blows, the murky cloud of dust and sand, he crawled, in time to see the Corinthian and Byzantine go on down the course after Ben-Hur, who had not been an instant delayed.

The people arose and leaped upon the benches, and shouted and screamed. Those who looked that way caught glimpses of Messala, now under the trampling of the fours, now under the abandoned cars. He was still; they thought him dead: but far the greater number followed Ben-Hur in his career. They had not seen the cunning touch of the reins by which, turning a little to the left, he caught Messala's wheel with the iron-shod point of his axle, and crushed it; but they had seen the transformation of the man, and themselves felt the heat and glow of his spirit, the heroic resolution, the maddening energy of action with which, by look, word, and gesture, he so suddenly inspired his Arabs. And such running! It was rather the long leaping of lions in harness; but for the lumbering chariot, it seemed the four were flying. When the Byzantine and Corinthian were half-way down the course, Ben-Hur turned the first goal.

And the race was WON!

The consul arose; the people shouted themselves hoarse; the editor came down from his seat, and crowned the victors.

The fortunate man among the boxers was a low-browed, yellow-haired Saxon, of such brutalized face as to attract a second look from Ben-Hur, who recognized a teacher with whom he himself had been a favorite at Rome. From him the young Jew looked up and beheld Simonides and his party on the balcony. They waved their hands to him. Esther kept her seat; but Iras arose and gave him a smile and a wave of her fan,—favors not the less intoxicating to him because we know, O reader, they would have fallen to Messala had he been the victor.

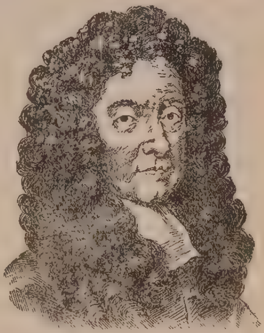
The procession was then formed, and midst the shouting of the multitude which had had its will, passed out of the Gate of Triumph.

And the day was over.

EDMUND WALLER

(1605–1687)

The life of Edmund Waller extended over a period of important change in English literature. When he began to write, in the early part of the seventeenth century, the great literature of the Elizabethan era had been written, the surge of inspiration and impassioned poetry of which Shakespeare was the heart had died away. The brilliant formalism which was to attain its apotheosis in Pope was already discernible. Edmund Waller made use in his verse of the classic iambic and distich. He first appears among the court poets of Charles I. In some respects most commonplace, he yet presents a singular figure among his associates,—Cowley, Crashaw, Lovelace, and Suckling. His poetry, like that of the other Cavalier poets, was more of gallantry than of love; he wrote with no great range of subjects, nor depth of feeling. But the form of his verse bears a closer resemblance to that of Dryden and Pope, and indeed to the poetry of to-day, than it does to the writing of Crashaw and Cowley. Later in his life Waller invariably confined the sense within the limits of the distich; making his verse somewhat monotonous, but giving to it a finish quite unusual in his time. The polish of his verse may have been due to French influence, exerted during his nine years' exile in that country; but Dr. Johnson declares that Waller wrote as smoothly at eighteen as at eighty,—«smoothness» being the particular quality ascribed to him.



Edmund Waller

The poet's life was more varied than his poetry, furnishing him an abundance of subjects to overlay with his light play of fancy. He was born in Hertfordshire, March 3d, 1605. His family were wealthy land-owners, and his mother, although related to Cromwell, was an ardent royalist. He followed whichever side was victorious. At sixteen he was in Parliament, but kept becomingly silent, merely using the advantages of his position to marry a young heiress; and with her fortune joined to his, he retired to the country to give himself up to literary pursuits. Just when he began to write is not known. The date of the subject of his first poem, 'His Majesty's Escape,' is 1623. Some of his best poetry was written in an effort to win Lady Dorothea Sidney, his Saccharissa, between the death of his wife in 1634 and the marriage of Lady Dorothea in 1639. Meeting him years after, the lady asked him when he would again write such verses to her. «When you are as young, madam, and as handsome, as you were then,» replied the poet. This remark furnishes a key to his character. He was facile and witty, but cold, shallow, and selfish.

In 1643, when the struggle between the King and Parliament grew hotter, Waller was implicated in what was known as Waller's plot. He was discovered, and behaved with the most abject meanness; immediately turning informer, and saving himself by giving up three others to death. He was let off with a fine of £1000, and was banished to France. From France he directed the publication of his first volume of poems. Here he lived in high reputation as a wit for nine years; when, at the intervention of anti-royalist friends, he was allowed to return to England. He immediately wrote a 'Panegyric to my Lord Protector,' which is one of his best poems. Cromwell was friendly to him; and on the Protector's death, Waller wrote another poem to him, which under the circumstances must appear somewhat disinterested. However, when Charles II. came into his kingdom, Waller was ready with a series of verses for him. Charles, who admitted the poet to his intimacy, complained that this poem was inferior to Cromwell's. «Sire,» responded the quick-witted Waller, «poets succeed better in fiction than in truth.»

Waller was in Parliament up to the time of his death in 1687. He was said to be the delight of the Commons for his wit. His poems went through several editions, and he continued to write. Long before his death he saw the end of the romantic and irregular school, and the full establishment of the classic and regular. John Dryden has been called the first of the moderns. But «Edmund Waller,» said Dryden, «first showed us to conclude the sense most commonly in distichs; which, in the verse of those before him, runs on for so many lines together that the reader is out of breath to overtake it.» Thus Waller becomes the founder of a school, the influence of which extended over a hundred and fifty years; though as a poet he sinks into insignificance beside Dryden and Pope, who gave the school its character when they stamped it with their genius.

Fenton calls Waller «maker and model of melodious verse.» In the sense that he revived the form of a past age, and gave to it a greater precision than it had ever possessed, he is a maker of verse. Moreover, in 'Go, Lovely Rose,' he wrote one of the most perfect lyrics in the tongue; and one such poem will embalm its writer. But

Waller's art was limited; the form was not new: and the popularity of the poet exists chiefly through the praises of greater men, who having too much to say to take time for the invention of a method of their own, used the form to which he had directed their attention.

FROM THE POEM

OF THE DANGER HIS MAJESTY (BEING PRINCE) ESCAPED IN THE ROAD AT ST. ANDERO

With painted oars the youths begin to sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep;
Which soon becomes the seat of sudden war
Between the wind and tide, that fiercely jar.
As when a sort of lusty shepherds try
Their force at football, care of victory
Makes them salute so rudely breast to breast,
That their encounter seems too rough for jest,—
They ply their feet, and still the restless ball,
Tost to and fro, is urgèd by them all,—
So fares the doubtful barge 'twixt tide and winds,
And like effect of their contention finds.
Yet the bold Britons still securely rowed:
Charles and his virtue was their sacred load;
Than which a greater pledge Heaven could not give,
That the good boat this tempest should outlive.
But storms increase! and now no hope of grace
Among them shines, save in the prince's face.
The pale Iberians had expired with fear,
But that their wonder did divert their care,
To see the prince with danger moved no more
Than with the pleasures of their court before:
Godlike his courage seemed, whom nor delight
Could soften, nor the face of Death affright;
Next to the power of making tempests cease,
Was in that storm to have so calm a peace.

THE COUNTESS OF CARLISLE

OF HER CHAMBER

THEY taste of death, that do at heaven arrive;
But we this paradise approach alive.
Instead of Death, the dart of Love does strike:
And renders all within these walls alike;
The high in titles, and the shepherd here
Forgets his greatness, and forgets his fear.
All stand amazed, and gazing on the fair
Lose thought of what themselves or others are;
Ambition lose: and have no other scope,
Save Carlisle's favor, to employ their hope.
The Thracian could (though all those tales were true
The bold Greeks tell) no greater wonders do:
Before his feet so sheep and lions lay,
Fearless and wrathless while they heard him play.
The gay, the wise, the gallant, and the grave,
Subdued alike, all but one passion have;
No worthy mind but finds in hers there is
Something proportioned to the rule of his;
While she, with cheerful but impartial grace,
(Born for no one, but to delight the race
Of men,) like Phœbus, so divides her light,
And warms us, that she stoops not from her height.

ON A GIRDLE

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind:
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this hath done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move!

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good and all that's fair:
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

GO, LOVELY ROSE

Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee!—
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

FROM ‹A PANEGYRIC TO MY LORD PROTECTOR›

While with a strong and yet a gentle hand,
You bridle faction, and our hearts command,
Protect us from ourselves, and from the foe;
Make us unite, and make us conquer too.

Let partial spirits still aloud complain,
Think themselves injured that they cannot reign,
And own no liberty, but where they may
Without control upon their fellows prey.

Above the waves, as Neptune showed his face,
To chide the winds and save the Trojan race,
So has your Highness, raised above the rest,
Storms of ambition tossing us repressed.

Your drooping country, torn with civil hate,
Restored by you, is made a glorious State;

The seat of empire, where the Irish come,
And the unwilling Scots, to fetch their doom.

The sea's our own: and now all nations greet,
With bending sails, each vessel of our fleet;
Your power extends so far as winds can blow,
Or swelling sails upon the globe may go.

Heaven, that hath placed this island to give law,
To balance Europe, and its States to awe,
In this conjunction doth on Britain smile,
The greatest leader and the greatest isle!

Whether this portion of the world were rent
By the rude ocean from the continent,
Or thus created, it was sure designed
To be the sacred refuge of mankind.

Hither the oppressèd shall henceforth resort,
Justice to crave, and succor at your court;
And then your Highness, not for ours alone,
But for the world's Protector, shall be known. . . .

Still as you rise, the State exalted too,
Finds no distemper while 'tis changed by you;
Changed like the world's great scene! when, without noise,
The rising sun night's vulgar lights destroys.

Had you, some ages past, this race of glory
Run, with amazement we should read your story;
But living virtue, all achievements past,
Meets envy still to grapple with at last.

This Cæsar found; and that ungrateful age,
With losing him, went back to blood and rage;
Mistaken Brutus thought to break their yoke,
But cut the bond of union with that stroke.

That sun once set, a thousand meaner stars
Gave a dim light to violence and wars,—
To such a tempest as now threatens all,
Did not your mighty arm prevent the fall.

If Rome's great Senate could not wield that sword
Which of the conquered world had made them lord,

What hope had ours, while yet their power was new,
To rule victorious armies, but by you?

You, that had taught them to subdue their foes,
Could order teach, and their high sp'rits compose;
To every duty could their minds engage,
Provoke their courage, and command their rage.

So when a lion shakes his dreadful mane,
And angry grows, if he that first took pain
To tame his youth approach the haughty beast,
He bends to him, but frights away the rest.

As the vexed world, to find repose, at last
Itself into Augustus's arms did cast,
So England now does, with like toil opprest,
Her weary head upon your bosom rest.

Then let the Muses, with such notes as these,
Instruct us what belongs unto our peace.
Your battles they hereafter shall indite,
And draw the image of our Mars in fight:

Tell of towns stormed, and armies overrun,
And mighty kingdoms by your conduct won;
How, while you thundered, clouds of dust did choke
Contending troops, and seas lay hid in smoke.

Illustrious acts high raptures do infuse,
And every conqueror creates a Muse!
Here, in low strains, your milder deeds we sing,
But there, my lord, we'll bays and olives bring

To crown your head: while you in triumph ride
O'er conquered nations, and the sea beside;
While all your neighbor princes unto you,
Like Joseph's sheaves, pay reverence and due.

ON LOVE

Anger, in hasty words or blows,
Itself discharges on our foes;
And sorrow, too, finds some relief
In tears which wait upon our grief:
So every passion but fond love
Unto its own redress does move;
But that alone the wretch inclines
To what prevents his own designs:
Makes him lament, and sigh, and weep,
Disordered, tremble, fawn, and creep;
Postures which render him despised,
Where he endeavors to be prized.
For women — born to be controlled —
Stoop to the forward and the bold;
Affect the haughty and the proud,
The gay, the frolic, and the loud.
Who first the generous steed oppressed,
Not kneeling did salute the beast;
But with high courage, life, and force,
Approaching, tamed th' unruly horse.

Unwisely we the wiser East
Pity, supposing them oppressed
With tyrants' force, whose law is will,
By which they govern, spoil, and kill:
Each nymph, but moderately fair,
Commands with no less rigor here.
Should some brave Turk, that walks among
His twenty lasses, bright and young,
Behold as many gallants here,
With modest guise and silent fear,
All to one female idol bend,
While her pride does scarce descend
To mark their follies, he would swear
That these her guard of eunuchs were,
And that a more majestic queen,
Or humbler slaves, he had not seen.

All this with indignation spoke,
In vain I struggled with the yoke
Of mighty Love; that conquering look,
When next beheld, like lightning strook

My blasted soul, and made me bow
Lower than those I pitied now.

So the tall stag, upon the brink
Of some smooth stream about to drink,
Surveying there his armèd head,
With shame remembers that he fled
The scornèd dogs, resolves to try
The combat next: but if their cry
Invades again his trembling ear,
He straight resumes his wonted care;
Leaves the untasted spring behind,
And winged with fear, outflies the wind.

AT PENSHURST

While in this park I sing, the listening deer
Attend my passion, and forget to fear;
When to the beeches I report my flame,
They bow their heads as if they felt the same.
To gods appealing, when I reach their bowers
With loud complaints, they answer me in showers.
To thee a wild and cruel soul is given,
More deaf than trees, and prouder than the heaven!
Love's foe professed! why dost thou falsely feign
Thyself a Sidney? from which noble strain
He sprung, that could so far exalt the name
Of Love, and warm our nation with his flame,
That all we can of love or high desire,
Seems but the smoke of amorous Sidney's fire.
Nor call her mother who so well does prove
One breast may hold both chastity and love.
Never can she, that so exceeds the spring
In joy and bounty, be supposed to bring
One so destructive. To no human stock
We owe this fierce unkindness, but the rock —
That cloven rock produced thee, by whose side
Nature, to recompense the fatal pride
Of such stern beauty, placed those healing springs
Which not more help than that destruction brings.
Thy heart no ruder than the rugged stone,
I might, like Orpheus, with my numerous moan

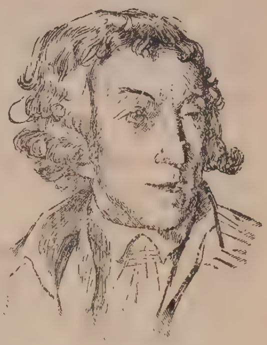
Melt to compassion; now my traitorous song
With thee conspires to do the singer wrong:
While thus I suffer not myself to lose
The memory of what augments my woes;
But with my own breath still foment the fire,
Which flames as high as fancy can aspire!

This last complaint the indulgent ears did pierce
Of just Apollo, president of verse;
Highly concernèd that the Muse should bring
Damage to one whom he had taught to sing,
Thus he advised me:—« On yon aged tree
Hang up thy lute, and hie thee to the sea,
That there with wonders thy diverted mind
Some truce, at least, may with this passion find.»
Ah, cruel nymph! from whom her humble swain
Flies for relief unto the raging main,
And from the winds and tempests does expect
A milder fate than from her cold neglect!
Yet there he'll pray that the unkind may prove
Blest in her choice; and vows this endless love
Springs from no hope of what she can confer,
But from those gifts which Heaven has heaped on her.

HORACE WALPOLE

(1717–1797)

Horace Walpole might be called the Beau Brummel of English men of letters; yet the criticism which takes account chiefly of his elegances is in danger of overlooking his substantial literary merits. These are well established, and singular in their class and degree: their limitations perhaps add to their worth rather than detract from it. Walpole's writings have the distinctive little beauties of a Watteau landscape, whose artificiality is part of its charm. They bear about them, moreover, an attractive atmosphere of irresponsibility, as emanating from one who disavowed the serious claims of authorship, making of literature always a gentlemanly diversion,— over which it was permissible to wax serious, however, as over the laying out of a garden maze, or the construction of a lath-and-plaster Gothic tower.



Horace Walpole

The life of Horace Walpole stretches over the greater part of the eighteenth century, of which century he was an organic part; reflecting its admirable good sense, its complete materialism, its cleverness, and its wit. Born in 1717, the son of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, the fashionable world of the day was his by inheritance. Between the beef-eating, coarse-living statesman, and his elegant little son, there could not have been much sympathy; but the child accepted readily enough the advantages which his father's position brought to him. The fascination which royalty always exercised over him was early shown by his insisting, at the age of ten years, upon a presentation to George I. He was sent in the same year to Eton, a place forever memorable to him by reason of the lifelong friendships which he formed there,— with his cousins Henry Conway and Lord Hertford, with George Selwyn, with George and Charles Montagu, with Thomas Gray the poet, with Richard West and Thomas Ashton. In 1734 he left Eton, without having specially distinguished himself. In 1735 he entered King's College, Cambridge, although his mathematical attainments were summed up in an insecure knowledge of the multiplication table; at Cambridge, however, he broadened his knowledge of the modern tongues, thus preparing himself for a Continental residence. In 1739, in company with Gray, he left the University to make the conventional grand tour. From the Continent he wrote many of the letters for which he is famous. The two young men arrived at length in Florence, where they took up their residence with Sir Horace Mann, the British minister plenipotentiary to Tuscany, who afterwards became one of Walpole's chief correspondents. At Florence, Walpole was drawn more and more into fashionable society; Gray more and more into the scholar's life, under the stimulus of Italy's antiquities. The separation between the two friends, inevitable under the circumstances, soon came. In after years Walpole assumed all the blame of the quarrel which was the apparent cause of their parting.

In September 1741 he himself returned to England, where the ministry of Sir Robert was tottering to its fall. He took his seat in the House as representative from the borough of Callington, making at this time strong speeches in defense of his father. Sir Robert, however, resigned in 1742, was created Earl of Orford, and immediately retired to Houghton, the seat of the family. His son joined him there; but this residence in Norfolk, among the hunting gentry of the county, was a weary exile to Horace. «Only imagine,» he writes, «that I here every day see men who are mountains of roast beef, and only seem just roughly hewn out into outlines of human form, like the giant rock of Pratolino. I shudder when I see them brandish their knives in act to carve, and look on them as savages that devour one another.»

In 1745 Sir Robert Walpole died. Two years after his death his son purchased the villa at Twickenham, which was to become one of the famous houses of Europe under the name of Strawberry Hill. The original villa was the nucleus of a fantastic Gothic structure, which grew year after year, until it became not unlike a miniature castle. Walpole, through his father's influence, had come into the possession of several lucrative sinecures, and had also wealth by inheritance. He could gratify his tastes to the utmost; it was at Strawberry Hill that his life as an English man of letters, and as a dilettante, really commences. His house became, more than the houses of the majority of men, the expression of his mind. Its ancient stained glass, its armor, its rare china, its rare prints, its old masters, its curious relics of departed greatness, its strange architecture following no known rules, seemed the outward symbols of certain qualities of Walpole's mind,—his love of the choicest gossip, his self-conscious aristocracy, his ingenuity, his frank insincerity. At

Strawberry Hill he set up a printing-press,— as necessary a part of a cultured gentleman's establishment as his library or his art gallery. His old friendship with Gray having been resumed, he edited and printed the works of the poet, with illustrations by Bentley. Among other famous books which were issued from this press were the 'Life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury,' Heutzner's 'Journey into England,' and not a few of Walpole's own works. During his long residence at Twickenham, he wrote the majority of those letters which stand in the highest rank of their class. Among his correspondents were Robert Jephson the playwright, the poet Mason, the Countess of Ossory, his cousin Henry Conway, Sir Horace Mann, George Montagu, and Madame du Deffand. With the last his friendship was long and close. It was natural that the France of the latter half of the eighteenth century should have peculiar attractions for a man of Walpole's temperament. Moreover, he was always fond of women's society: perhaps they understood his temperament better than men,— he himself, at least, possessing many lady-like tastes and qualities. The two women who were nearest and dearest to him in his old age were Mary and Agnes Berry, of whom he has left a charming description in a letter to a friend. They lived near him until his death; and he bequeathed to them Strawberry Hill, besides a considerable sum of money. He died in 1797.

The reputation of Walpole as an author rests upon his letters. His romantic novel 'The Castle of Otranto,' and his dreadful tragedy 'The Mysterious Mother,' are famous only in their oblivion. His 'Anecdotes of Painting in England,' his 'Memoirs of the Last Ten Years of King George II.,' his 'Journal of the Reign of George III.,' have greater claims to remembrance. It is in his letters, however, that he fully expresses his individuality. They are among the most entertaining letters that were ever written: full of high-toned gossip, of the fruits of keen observation of men and things, displaying a genuine love of the beautiful and the picturesque,— they are, in the fullest sense, readable. They give the impression moreover of reserve force, as if their writer might accomplish great things if he chose. Subsequent generations have given the benefit of the doubt to the elegant creator of Strawberry Hill. A man who does a small thing to perfection, is generally suspected of having other, unknown powers at his command. What Horace Walpole might have done is almost as prominent an element in his reputation as what he did do.

COCK-LANE GHOST AND LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU

From Letter to Sir Horace Mann

I AM ashamed to tell you that we are again dipped into an egregious scene of folly. The reigning fashion is a ghost,—a ghost that would not pass muster in the paltriest convent in the Apennine. It only knocks and scratches; does not pretend to appear or to speak. The clergy give it their benediction; and all the world, whether believers or infidels, go to hear it. I, in which number you may guess, go to-morrow; for it is as much the mode to visit the ghost as the Prince of Mecklenburg, who is just arrived. I have not seen him yet, though I left my name for him. But I will tell you who is come too,—Lady Mary Wortley. I went last night to visit her; I give you my honor (and you who know her would credit it me without it), the following is a faithful description. I found her in a little miserable bedchamber of a ready-furnished house, with two tallow candles, and a bureau covered with pots and pans. On her head, in full of all accounts, she had an old black-laced hood, wrapped entirely round, so as to conceal all hair or want of hair. No handkerchief, but up to her chin a kind of horseman's riding-coat, calling itself a pet-en-l'air, made of a dark green (green I think it had been) brocade, with colored and silver flowers, and lined with furs; boddice laced, a foul dimity petticoat sprig'd, velvet muffeteens on her arms, gray stockings and slippers. Her face less changed in twenty years than I could have imagined: I told her so, and she was not so tolerable twenty years ago that she needed have taken it for flattery; but she did, and literally gave me a box on the ear. She is very lively, all her senses perfect, her languages as imperfect as ever, her avarice greater. She entertained me at the first with nothing but the dearness of provisions at Helvoet. With nothing but an Italian, a French, and a Prussian, all men-servants,—and something she calls an *old* secretary, but whose age till he appears will be doubtful,—she receives all the world, who go to homage her as Queen Mother, and crams them into this kennel. The Duchess of Hamilton, who came in just after me, was so astonished and diverted that she could not speak to her for laughing. She says that she has left all her clothes at Venice.

A YEAR OF FASHION IN WALPOLE'S DAY

From Letter to the Earl of Hertford

You are sensible, my dear lord, that any amusement from my letters must depend upon times and seasons. We are a very absurd nation (though the French are so good at present as to think us a very wise one, only because they themselves are now a very weak one); but then that absurdity depends upon the almanac. Posterity, who will know nothing of our intervals, will conclude that this age was a succession of events. I could tell them that we know as well when an event, as when Easter, will happen. Do but recollect these last ten years. The beginning of October, one is certain that everybody will be at Newmarket, and the Duke of Cumberland will lose, and Shafto win, two or three thousand pounds. After that, while people are preparing to come to town for the winter, the ministry is suddenly changed, and all the world comes to learn how it happened, a fortnight sooner than they intended; and fully persuaded that the new arrangement cannot last a month. The Parliament opens: everybody is bribed; and the new establishment is perceived to be composed of adamant. November passes with two or three self-murders, and a new play. Christmas arrives: everybody goes out of town; and a riot happens in one of the theatres. The Parliament meets again, taxes are warmly opposed; and some citizen makes his fortune by a subscription. The Opposition languishes; balls and assemblies begin; some master and miss begin to get together, are talked of, and give occasion to forty more matches being invented; an unexpected debate starts up at the end of the session, that makes more noise than anything that was designed to make a noise, and subsides again in a new peerage or two. Ranelagh opens, and Vauxhall: one produces scandal, and t'other a drunken quarrel. People separate, some to Tunbridge, and some to all the horse-races in England; and so the year comes again to October.

FUNERAL OF GEORGE II.

From 'Letter to George Montagu, Esq.'

Do you know, I had the curiosity to go to the burying t'other night,—I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it is, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The Prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The Ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute-guns,—all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the Abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole abbey so illuminated that one saw it to greater advantage than by day, —the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof all appearing distinctly and with the happiest chiaroscuro. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being Catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying for help, oppressed by the great weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter "Man that is born of a woman" was chanted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark-brown Adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it nearly two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend: think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bedchamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the King's order.

GOSSIP ABOUT THE FRENCH AND FRENCH WOMEN

From Letter to Mr. Gray

By what I said of their religious or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality atheists — at least, not the men. Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman Catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the Parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present, too, they are a little triumphant,— the court has shown a little spirit, and the Parliaments much less; but as the Duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the Parliament of Bretagne, the Parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority. I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country; if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common-sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness,— seldom a favorable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity which seem to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her, for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge; but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous Madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be a useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, Madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the Regent; is now very old and stone-blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has everything new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, ay, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or anybody, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible; for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved,—I don't mean by lovers,—and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and *ennui* are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts,—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend whom I must mention: a Monsieur Pondeveyle, author of the 'Fat puni,' and the 'Complaisant,' and of those pretty novels the 'Comte de Cominge,' the 'Siege of Calais,' and 'Les Malheurs de l'Amour.' Would you not expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is;—yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the Regent's 'Daphnis and Chloe' to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but he is so old, and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation: seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humorist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's 'Rake's Progress,' the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither,—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so when she pleases of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shows it; and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorraine, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the King. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure when it is her interest; but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the King to carry on a course of paying debts or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the Queen; and the very next day this Princess of Lorraine was seen riding backwards with Madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the King was stabbed, and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted D'Argenson whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, By all means. Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The King recovered his spirits, D'Argenson was banished, and La Maréchale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of Monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads which approach to good ones; and who luckily for us was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favorite object and province. He employed Pondeveyle to make a song on the Pompadour; it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even Majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the King that he had poisoned her predecessor, Madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *savante*, mistress of the Prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible, too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing,—but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and though a *savante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of Monsieur de Nivernois; for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels. It requires the greatest curiosity, or the greatest habitude, to discover the smallest connexion between the sexes here. No familiarity, but under the veil of friendship, is permitted; and Love's dictionary is as much prohibited, as at first sight one should think his ritual was. All you hear, and that pronounced with *nonchalance*, is that *Monsieur un tel* has had *Madame une telle*. . . .

The Duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes; and is a little model in waxwork, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! so just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Everybody loves it but its husband, who prefers his own sister, the Duchesse de Grammont,— an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him. But I doubt it: she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character,— but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing,— the Maréchale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable,— as Mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont,— they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. That *passe-partout* called the fashion has made them fly open — and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself. Yes, like Queen Eleanor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild-fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had liked to have spoiled all by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the Prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he either), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect; but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come here to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince, or a learned canary-bird; and was in particular carried by force to the Princess of Talmond, the Queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat and a footstool in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with a great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chestnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions that Paris will not want anything else these three weeks. I will inclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add that nothing has interrupted my Sévigné researches but the frost. The Abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the Comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March: I shall be there by the end of it.

THE ENGLISH CLIMATE

From Letter to George Montagu, Esq.

STRAWBERRY HILL, June 15th, 1768.

NO, I CANNOT be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle. As you go pitching your tent up and down, I wish you were still more a Tartar, and shifted your quarters perpetually. Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your Duke and Duchess (the Argylls) travel to the North? I know that he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that she is not as amiable a *laddess*, but I had rather see their house comfortably when they are not there.

I perceive the deluge fell upon you before it reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight-and-forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason: it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore throats and agues with attempting to realize these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites Miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a northeast wind, that makes Damon button up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue; and then they cry, *This is a bad summer!* as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and making our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and, depend upon it, will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer; I mean the hot-house in St. Stephen's chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there is very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any; it is most indifferent to me who is in or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my Lord Mansfield. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying; but what signifies who has the undoing it? I seldom suffer myself to think on this subject: *my* patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

I am sorry you are likely to lose your poor cousin Lady Hinchinbrook; I heard a very bad account of her when I was last in town. Your letter to Madame Roland shall be taken care of; but as you are so scrupulous of making me pay postage, I must remember not to overcharge you, as I can frank my idle letters no longer; therefore, good night!

P. S.—I was in town last week and found Mr. Chute still confined. He had a return in his shoulder, but I think it more rheumatism than gout.

THE QUIPU SYSTEM; PROPHECIES OF NATIONAL RUIN

From 'Letter to the Countess of Ossory'

I RETURN the Quipos, madam, because if I retained them till I understand them, I fear you would never have them again. I should as soon be able to hold a dialogue with a rainbow, by the help of its grammar, a prism; for I have not yet discovered which is the first or last verse of four lines that hang like ropes of onions. Yet it is not for want of study, or want of respect for the Peruvian manner of writing. I perceive it is a very soft language; and though at first I tangled the poem and spoiled the rhymes, yet I can conceive that a harlequin's jacket, artfully arranged by a princess of the blood of Mango Capac, may contain a deep tragedy, and that a tawdry trimming may be a version of Solomon's Song. Nay, I can already say my alphabet of six colors, and know that each stands indiscriminately *but* for four letters,—which gives the Peruvian a great advantage over the Hebrew tongue, in which the total want of vowels left every word at the mercy of the reader; and though our salvation depended upon it, we did not know precisely what any word signified, till the invention of points, that were not used till the language had been obsolete for some thousands of years. A little uncertainty, as where one has but one letter instead of four, may give rise to many beauties. Puns must be greatly assisted by that ambiguity, and the delicacies of the language may depend on an almost imperceptible variation in the shades. . . . I have heard of a French perfumer who wrote an essay on the harmony of essences. Why should not that idea be extended? The Peruvian Quipos adapted a language to the eyes, rather than to the ears. Why should not there be one for the nose? The more the senses can be used indifferently for each other, the more our understandings would be enlarged. A rose, a jessamine, a pink, a jonquil, and a honeysuckle, might signify the vowels; the consonants to be represented by other flowers. The Cape jessamine, which has two smells, was born a diphthong. How charming it would be to smell an ode from a nosegay, and to scent one's handkerchief with a favorite song. Indeed, many improvements might be made on the Quipos themselves, especially as they might be worn as well as perused. A trimming set on a new lute-string would be equivalent to a second edition with corrections. . . .

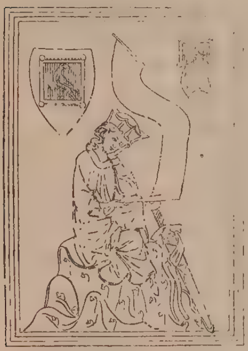
In good truth, I was glad of anything that would occupy me, and turn my attention from all the horrors one hears or apprehends. I am sorry I have read the devastation of Barbadoes and Jamaica, etc., etc.: when one can do no good, can neither prevent nor redress, nor has any personal share, by one's self or one's friends, is it not excusable to steep one's attention in anything? . . . The expedition sent against the Spanish settlements is cut off by the climate, and not a single being is left alive. The Duchess of Bedford told me last night that the poor soldiers were so averse, that they were driven to the march by the point of the bayonet; and that, besides the men, twenty-five officers have perished. Lord Cornwallis and his tiny army are scarce in a more prosperous way. On this dismal canvas a fourth war is embroidered; and what, I think, threatens still more, the French administration is changed, and likely to be composed of more active men, and much more hostile to England. Our ruin seems to me inevitable. Nay, I know those who smile in the drawing-room, that groan by their fireside: they own we have no more men to send to America, and think our credit almost as nearly exhausted. Can you wonder, then, madam, if I am glad to play with Quipos — Oh, no! nor can I be sorry to be on the verge — does one wish to live to weep over the ruins of Carthage?

WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE AND HIS TIMES

(EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURY)

BY CHARLES HARVEY GENUNG

WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE is the greatest lyric poet of Germany before Goethe, and the first supremely great lyric poet that the nations of modern Europe produced. There is a musical cadence in the very name that is like a chord struck by the minstrel on his lyre as the prelude to a lay of love. But Walther was not a Minnesinger only: he could tune his instrument to sterner themes, swaying the popular passions and moving the hearts of princes; great political movements were checked or speeded by his powerful rhymes. He was thus not only the chief literary figure of his time, but he became also an important political force. In him too, as in his great contemporaries Wolfram von Eschenbach and Hartmann von Aue, the deep religious spirit of the age found expression. Gottfried von Strassburg pictured the courtly graces, the manly accomplishments, and the extravagant ideals, of chivalry at its height.



WALTHER

These men, with the legion of lesser Minnesingers, shed radiance upon the reign of the greatest of mediæval emperors, Frederick II.; than whom no more enlightened prince had sat upon a European throne since the days of Alfred the Great and Charlemagne. Over all that wonderful age lies the fairy charm of poetry and romance. The court of Frederick recalls the fabled glories of the emperors of Trebizond; it shines through the mists of nearly seven centuries like an imperial city gleaming in a golden atmosphere. With the brave, bold, broad-minded characteristics of the Hohenstaufen house, Frederick united the rarest natural gifts,—learning, wisdom, foresight, and a passionate love of art and science. According to the picture that Raumer draws of him in the 'History of the Hohenstaufen,' he was a warrior and statesman, a poet and a naturalist, and a protector of learning and the fine arts. He mastered the languages of the six dominions that were united under his imperial sway: Greek, Latin, Italian, German, French, and Arabic. He promulgated the Sicilian Constitutions,—a book of laws far in advance of his times. He collected a vast library in many languages, and on the greatest variety of subjects. He made Greek works more accessible by having them translated into the vernacular. Copies were sent to the University of Bologna, although that institution stood in political opposition to him. In 1224 he founded the University of Naples, and many students were assisted from his own private purse.

After his coronation in 1215 he attached to himself Nicolà da Pisano, who was the first to shake off the conventionality of Byzantine art. Through neglect or destruction the imperial art collections have been lost; but the beautiful coins of Frederick's reign, and the splendid remains of palaces and castles, testify to the inspiring interest that the Emperor took in the arts. The bridge at Capua with its tower he designed himself. Mural paintings adorned at least one of his castles,—that of Foggia,—and the mosaics of Palermo we owe in a sense to him. It was he that gave an impulse to the study of natural history by founding a zoölogical garden, which, through his relations with Oriental princes, he was able to stock with exotic animals; and he caused a translation to be made of Aristotle's work on zoölogy. He himself wrote a book on falconry, which has intrinsic value aside from the interest which attaches to its age and origin. And since he was a poet and wrote love lyrics, singers and poets were gathered at his romantic court. His sympathies were, it is true, far more Italian than German: his efforts in behalf of the Italian tongue were soon to be crowned by the immortal work of Dante; but he was liberal-minded enough to treat the German language in the same way. Germany, to be sure, already had a literature, but the indifference of such a man as Frederick could have done much to check its development. The first State document in German, however, was issued by him when the Peace of Mayence was proclaimed in 1235. In this care for the popular languages of his dominions he resembled his great predecessors, Charlemagne and Alfred. He made himself the centre of intellectual activity throughout his broad realm.

It was this age also that saw the rise of the great Dominican and Franciscan orders, and of the Order of Mendicant Friars; it witnessed the career of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. At the north the court of the Landgrave Hermann of Thuringia became a rallying-point for minstrelsy and song; the historic contest of the singers on the Wartburg is a poetic memorial of those romantic days. Much that is best in our traditional romance had its rise then. From the time of the migrations down, rugged men of action had been making history which the poetic mind of the people transmitted into legend, until in this more cultivated age that vast fund of history and legend received its artistic form from the shaping genius of the great poets.

It was in the twelfth century that the Nibelungenlied was put into the strophes in which we read it. The crusade of Frederick Barbarossa in 1189 gave a powerful impulse to the intellectual activity of Germany. Contact with the Orient had introduced greater luxury and a higher refinement into the arts of living. The barbarian hordes which had overthrown the Roman empire had now taken their place among the leaders of European civilization. This was the long misunderstood and misrepresented thirteenth century, whose glories were soon transfigured in legend, obscured by the rise of democracy, and at last forgotten utterly in the wars of the seventeenth century. Honest ignorance, and the zeal of bigotry, finally succeeded in fastening upon it the name of the Dark Ages! The darkness lay elsewhere; for although we look back upon those dazzling days through the beautifying medium of many centuries, which shows them stripped of their sordidness and sorrow, it is certain that the early thirteenth century was the most brilliant period in German literary history until Goethe took up the Minnesingers' lyre, and evoked new harmonies at the old Thuringian court.

It was of an age such as this that Walther von der Vogelweide was the chief literary figure and a great political force. The rapid development of chivalry during the crusades had brought with it the *Minnedienst*,— the service and homage paid to women. Love and war were the essence of life, and both were the inspiration of song. The conception of love was deepened, idealized, refined. Love became an ennobling and purifying influence. It is the chivalrous homage of a vassal for a queen to whom he devotes his service and his life,— a conception unknown in the ruder days when Siegfried conquered Brünnhilde, and men won women sword in hand. In the expression of this homage there was often much euphuistic exaggeration, which weakened the directness of its appeal; but in Walther von der Vogelweide the note is always genuine, true, convincing. One of the earliest examples of supersensual love in European literature is in Walther's lines:—

«Would you know what may be the eyne
Wherewith I can see her whate'er befalls?
They are the thoughts of this heart of mine;
Therewith I can see her through castle walls.»

Walther's poems not only reveal the character of the man, but they tell the story of his life. They do not, however, give us the date or place of his birth. He was probably born in the Tyrol in 1170. At Bozen, on the borderlands between the German and Italian dominions of the Hohenstaufen emperors, Walther's heroic statue stands. His earliest song of which the date is known belongs to the year 1198, and already shows the mature artist. For forty years, he says he sang of love: it is no wonder, then, that in the end his love lyrics lost some of the red blood of youth. The year 1198 marked an epoch in his life. He had been attached to the Austrian court of the Babenbergers, and it was in Austria that he had learned «to sing and to say.» In 1197 the Emperor Henry VI. died, when his son, afterwards Frederick II., was but three years old. The political confusion reached its highest point. Walther seems to have become for a time a wandering minstrel, as did Wolfram also. The former sided with Philip of Suabia, brother of Henry, and sang at his coronation; the latter took the part of the rival King Otto. Philip triumphed; and at the court of Hermann of Thuringia, who had submitted to Philip, Walther was welcomed. It was there that he met Wolfram von Eschenbach. That was a picturesque moment in the annals of German literature, when the two greatest poets of the age came together within the borders of that illustrious little principality, where nearly seven hundred years later Goethe met his only rival and won his friendship. From the inexhaustible youthfulness of Walther, Wolfram derived his inspiration to finish the immortal ‹Parzifal›; and to Walther, Wolfram seems to have imparted some of his ethical earnestness and deep religious fervor. The contest on the Wartburg took place, according to tradition, in 1207. Two years later there came a change over the political face of Europe. Frederick II., having attained his fifteenth year, asserted his claim to his father's crown. He appeared at Coire, and made a triumphant progress down the Rhine. Hermann joined him, and Walther hailed him in a burst of lyric joy. And the homeless singer had a personal end in view. This is his pathetic and naïve petition:—

«Fain, could it be, would I a home obtain,
　And warm me by a hearth-side of my own.
Then, then, I'd sing about the sweet birds' strain,
　And fields and flowers, as I have whilome done;
And paint in song the lily and the rose
　That dwell upon *her* cheek who smiles on me.
But lone I stray—no home its comfort shows:
　Ah, luckless man! still doomed a *guest* to be!»

Frederick fulfilled his wish; and the poet broke out into the well-known song of jubilation, «I have my grant! I have my grant!» But he was never directly attached to the person of Frederick: he returned to the liberal court of Leopold VII., the Glorious, at Vienna, and again sang a mendicant minstrel's song:—

«To me is barred the door of joy and ease:
There stand I as an orphan, lone, forlorn,
And nothing boots me that I frequent knock.

Strange that on every hand the shower should fall,
And not one cheering drop should reach to me!
On all around the generous Austrian's gifts,
Gladdening the land, like genial rain descend.
A fair and gay adornèd mead is he,
Whereon are gathered oft the sweetest flowers:
Would that his rich and ever generous hand
Might stoop to pluck one little leaf for me,
So might I fitly praise a scene so fair.»

And when the great poets begged in song, the princes granted. Walther fared sumptuously at Vienna, honored among the noblest of the land.

Walther von der Vogelweide was the first patriot poet of German literature. The essential inner unity of the empire he perceived more clearly than perhaps any other man of his time. It was the consciousness of this national homogeneity that gave bitterness to his attacks upon the papacy. He resented foreign interference. The popes had always found it hard to hold this sturdy independent race in check; and now, when the papal power was at its height, the leading spirits of Germany were in open revolt against the exactions of Rome. All the great achievements of Frederick II. were accomplished in spite of the ban of excommunication. Walther, like Dante a few years later, was a stanch upholder of the empire; and neither Hutten, nor Sachs, nor Luther, was more vigorous in denunciations of Roman abuses than Walther the Minnesinger. In Walther's time it was emperor and people against the pope; in Luther's it was the people against emperor and pope: which marks the democratic change already begun in the thirteenth century. Walther inveighed as vigorously against the sectional strife of the German princes, and deplored the effect upon the fatherland in lines of thrilling patriotic fervor.

The great world-events in Walther's later life were the struggle between Frederick II. and the popes Innocent III. and Gregory IX., and the crusade which culminated in the conquest of Jerusalem. The Pope had excommunicated the Emperor for failing to keep his vow to institute a crusade, and Walther was outspoken in his urgency that this vow should be fulfilled. He was ever faithful to Frederick; but these doughty German singers were frank and bold for the thing that they thought right. There is a crusader's song of Walther's which would, taken literally, indicate that he had himself gone to the Holy Land. Probably however he did not. As the poet grew old his interest in purely worldly things decreased. His religious nature asserted itself, and some of his loftiest poems strike a profoundly devotional note. In Uhland's fine figure: «The earthly vanishes,— as when the sun sinks the valleys are covered with shadows, and soon only the highest peaks retain their radiance." Love became religion. The worship of Mary was closely associated with the homage paid to women, and all the Minnesingers have sung her praises. There was no irreverence in these chivalrous songs to the Virgin. She was the queen of the angels, to whom the knightly minstrels vowed allegiance. When Walther bade farewell to Dame World, whom he had served for forty years, he was preparing for his final resting-place:—

"Too well thy weakness have I proved;
Now would I leave thee,—it is time:
Good-night to thee, O World, good-night!
I haste me to my home."

The enduring charm of Walther's verse is due in large measure to his genuineness and to the moral elevation of his character: he was good as well as great. His roguish humor wins; his simplicity moves; the greatness of his soul uplifts. The emotions which he stirs are those of our common humanity in all ages. Several of his best poems have been rendered accessible to the English reader by the unsurpassed versions of Edgar Taylor, from whom some of the above citations have been taken, and who rendered also the following poem, written by Walther upon revisiting the scenes of his youth:—

AH! WHERE are hours departed fled?
Is life a dream, or true indeed?
Did all my heart hath fashionéd
From fancy's visitings proceed?
Yes, I have slept; and now unknown
To me the things best known before,—
The land, the people, once mine own,
Where are they? they are here no more;
My boyhood's friends all aged, worn,
Despoiled the woods, the fields, of home,
Only the streams flow on forlorn:
Alas, that e'er such change should come!
And he who knew me once so well
Salutes me now as one estranged;
The very earth to me can tell
Of naught but things perverted, changed:
And when I muse on other days,
That passed me as the dashing oars
The surface of the ocean raise,
Ceaseless my heart its fate deplores.

Walther died about 1230 in Würzburg, and there in the minster he lies buried. Longfellow has perpetuated the pretty legend concerning his grave. It is said to have been provided in his will that the birds from whom he learned his art should be fed daily at noon upon the slab which covers his resting-place.

«Thus the bard of love departed;
And fulfilling his desire,
On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir.»

By the side of Walther von der Vogelweide and the Minnesingers stood the epic poets Wolfram von Eschenbach, Hartmann von Aue, and Gottfried von Strassburg. Wolfram, if we omit the qualifying adjective «lyric,» must be called the greatest poet of the Middle Ages. Only seven of his lyrics have come down to us, but the tenderest ideals of love are expressed in the two epic songs from the 'Titurel' cycle. The full measure of his greatness is attained in the immortal 'Parzifal,' the finest courtly epic of German literature. It is not only a picture of the days of chivalry: it is the story of human life,—its struggles, aspirations, conflicting temptations, defeats, and final triumph. In a psychological sense it is the 'Faust' of mediæval Germany; and it reaches the same solution,—self-renunciation. The whole poem, in its moral exaltation, is akin to Dante's. 'Parzifal' is the expression of the highest ethical ideals of Germany in the Middle Ages; and the author's profound insight into the human heart shows him to have been the deepest thinker as he was the most powerful poet of his time. With Wolfram must be grouped Hartmann von Aue, because of the deep moral earnestness which both infused into their poetry. Wolfram planned his great work to fill the whole circle of religion and ethics; Hartmann was content with a few of its segments. The two epics 'Erec' and 'Iwein' do not rise above the commonplace level of the ordinary poetic tales of chivalry; but in the two shorter epic tales 'Gregorius' and 'Der Arme Heinrich' (Poor Henry), problems of the tortured human soul are treated with great simplicity and strength. For a sin unwittingly committed, Gregorius spends his life in severest penance, and receives at last the reward of his sincere atonement. 'Poor Henry' is the tale of a man of wealth and high position, who is suddenly stricken with a loathsome disease. Only the sacrifice of a young girl's life can save him; but from the devoted girl with whose parents he has taken refuge he nobly conceals this secret. She learns it finally, however, and this sacrifice appears to her in the light of a Divine mission: but at the last moment Henry refuses to accept salvation at such a price; his soul is cleansed of the last trace of selfishness, and at that moment he is restored to bodily health as well. Longfellow preserves this story for English readers in his poem 'The Golden Legend,' which forms the second part of 'Christus.'

Of a very different order of mind from these two ethical poets was Gottfried, the Master of Strassburg. His 'Tristan und Isolde' is the perfection of art, without superior among the mediæval courtly epics of Germany; but it deals solely with the overmastering passion of a guilty love, in which by reason of the magic potion the lovers are victims rather than sinners. There is no psychological problem, no ethical ideal, but there is a wealth of artistic culture and polished poetry. In Tristan we have the richest picture of German chivalry in its full flower that has been painted in literature. Gottfried was the most cultivated poet of his time, but he lacked the moral elevation of his rivals.

Of the host of the Minnesingers it is impossible to speak in detail. There is a mass of uncertain dates, picturesque names, legendary anecdotes, and beautiful poems. The lyric poetry of that age of song is wonderfully rich, but the name of Walther von der Vogelweide may stand as the symbol of the whole. Even in the testimony of his contemporaries he occupies the highest place. Gottfried did him homage; Wolfram praised him in 'Parzifal,' and in 'Titurel' called him «the exalted master.» Later poets looked up to him as their incomparable model; for Walther was fertile in the invention of elaborate and exquisitely musical measures. Some eighty new metres were original with him, from the simplest folk-song to the most majestic verse. A gradual process of petrifaction began when inspiration failed, and the traditions descended to lesser men. Thus rules came to be established, and the form was reverenced whence the soul had fled. This is doubtless the historic connection between the wooden age of the Mastersingers and Walther's age of gold. The descent had begun even in the time of Walther, who deplored the peasant realism of his contemporary Nithart, whose so-called 'Nitharte' represented the triumph of vulgarity over the courtly. But the descent was not precipitate, for there are still exquisite specimens of the minnesang in the early fourteenth century; as for instance, the poem «I saw yon infant in her arms carest» of the Zürich poet Hadloub. But in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the courtly vanished before the vulgar; and it required all the indefatigable industry of the sound-hearted Hans Sachs to rescue German literature from hopeless coarseness. Walther's name was still honored as a tradition, but it was only a name;—then darkness fell and that too was forgotten. The story of his rehabilitation is the same as that which relates the recovery of the Nibelungenlied. Bodmer turned the attention of Germans to their ancient poets; slowly the interest grew; at last the pioneers of German philology and the Romantic poets, especially Tieck,—who in 1803 published his edition of the Minnelieder,—restored the bards of the thirteenth century to their rightful place among the greatest singers of German song. And to-day every lover of pure lyric verse will echo with equal sincerity the sentiment of Walther's younger contemporary, Hugo von Trimberg, when he enthusiastically exclaims:—

> «Her Walther von der Vogelweide,—
> Swer des vergaez', der taet' mir leide.»

(Sir Walther von der Vogelweide,— I'd be sorry for any one that could forget him.)

Chas H Genung

SONG OF WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE

When from the sod the flowerets spring,
And smile to meet the sun's bright ray,
When birds their sweetest carols sing,
In all the morning pride of May,
What lovelier than the prospect there?
Can earth boast anything more fair?
To me it seems an almost heaven,
So beauteous to my eyes that vision bright is given.

But when a lady chaste and fair,
Noble, and clad in rich attire,
Walks through the throng with gracious air,
As sun that bids the stars retire,—
Then where are all thy boastings, May?
What hast thou beautiful and gay,
Compared with that supreme delight?
We leave thy loveliest flowers, and watch that lady bright.

Wouldst thou believe me,— come and place
Before thee all this pride of May,
Then look but on my lady's face,
And which is best and brightest say.
For me, how soon (if choice were mine)
This would I take, and that resign;
And say, «Though sweet thy beauties, May,
I'd rather forfeit all than lose my lady gay!»

Translation of Edgar Taylor

LAMENT OF WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE

AH ME! whither have vanished the years of age and youth?
Has life been but a dream, then, or was it all a truth?
And was that really somewhat which I have lived and thought?
Surely I must have slumbered, although I knew it not.
And now that I'm awakened, I not a whit recall
That once I was acquainted amongst these people all:
The country and the people 'mongst whom my life passed by
Have grown to be estrangèd, as if 'twere all a lie.

They who were once my playmates are weary now and cold;
The prairies have been broken, the woods cut down and sold.
If yonder river flowed not e'en as it once did flow,
I do believe my sorrow would, growing, lay me low.
Me greet with hesitation many who knew me well:
This wretched world is everywhere a dark, ungrateful hell;
And then I think of many days of ecstasy and joy,
That now e'en as a stroke on the sea have gone forever by—
Forever, forevermore, ah me!

Ah me, how sad and careworn our young men now appear!
The men who never sorrow in their fresh minds did wear
Do nothing now but weary— Ah me! how can it be?
Wherever in the world I turn, no one seems glad to me.
Dancing, laughing, singing, grief has driven away;
Christian man saw never a world so sombre aye:
Look now how our women walk with strange headgear,
And how our knights and nobles in clownish dress appear.

Letters sharp reproving from Rome have come our way:
To mourn we have permission; we must no more be gay.
It grieves me to my heart's core—we once did live so grand—
That now from cheerful laughter to weeping I must bend.
The wild birds of the forest sadden at our complaint,
Is't wonder if I also despair and grow more faint?
But what— O wretched me! have I been led to scoff?
Who follows earthly happiness, from heaven's bliss turneth off
Forevermore, ah me!

Ah me, how we are poisoned with the sweetness of the world!
I see the bitter gall amidst the sweetest honey curled.
The world is outward beautiful, white, and green, and red,
But inward, oh! a sombre black, gloomy, aye, and dead.

Yet now to who have listened a comfort I will show:
Even a gentle penance forgiveness shall bestow.
Remember this, O knightly lords, 'tis yours to do and seal;
You bear the glittering helmets and breastplates of strong steel,

Moreo'er the shields so steady and the consecrated swords:
O God, that I were worthy to join the victor lords!
Then should I like the others achieve a prize untold,—
Not lands that have been promised, nor king's or nobles' gold,
But oh, a wondrous crown, and forevermore to wear
A crown which poorest soldier can win with axe or spear.
Yea, if the noble crusade I might follow o'er the sea,
I evermore should sing, All's well! and nevermore, Ah me!
Nevermore, Ah me!

Translation of A. E. Kroeger.

SONG OF WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH

Would I the lofty spirit melt
Of that proud dame who dwells so high,
Kind Heaven must aid me, or unfelt
By her will be its agony.
Joy in my soul no place can find:
As well might I a suitor be
To thunderbolts, as hope her mind
Will turn in softer mood to me.

Those cheeks are beautiful, are bright
As the red rose with dewdrops graced;
And faultless is the lovely light
Of those dear eyes, that, on me placed,
Pierce to my very heart, and fill
My soul with love's consuming fires,
While passion burns and reigns at will,—
So deep the love that fair inspires!

But joy upon her beauteous form
Attends, her hues so bright to shed
O'er those red lips, before whose warm
And beaming smile all care is fled.
She is to me all light and joy;
I faint, I die, before her frown:
Even Venus, lived she yet on earth,
A fairer goddess here must own. . . .

While many mourn the vanished light
 Of summer, and the sweet sun's face,
I mourn that these, however bright,
 No anguish from the soul can chase
By love inflicted: all around
 Nor song of birds, nor ladies' bloom,
Nor flowers upspringing from the ground,
 Can chase or cheer the spirit's gloom. . . .

Yet still thine aid, beloved, impart;
 Of all thy power, thy love, make trial;
Bid joy revive in this sad heart,—
 Joy that expires at thy denial:
Well may I pour my prayer to thee,
 Belovèd lady, since 'tis thine
Alone to send such care on me;
 Alone for thee I ceaseless pine.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

BLANCHEFLEUR AT THE TOURNAMENT

From 'Tristan and Isolde' of Gottfried von Strassburg

At Tintajoel 'twas, on the plain
 Where the guests met again;
 In the loveliest glen
Ever beheld by eyes of men
In the first freshness of that clime.
The gentle, gracious summer-time
Had by the sweet Creator's hand
With sweet care been poured on the land.
Of little wood birdlets bright,
That to ears should ever give delight,
Of grass, flowers, leaves, and blossoms high,
Of all that happy makes the eye
Or noble heart delight may gain,
Was full the glorious summer plain.
Whatever there you wished to find,
Spring had kindly borne in mind,—
The sunshine by the shadow,
The linden on the meadow.
The gentle, pleasant breezes,
With cunning, sweet caresses,

O'er all the guests did lightly sweep.
The brilliant flowers did brightly peep
From dewy grass and shadow.
May's friend, the fresh green meadow,
Had from the flowers that he had reared
A summer robe so bright prepared,
Each guest its glow detected
From eye and mien reflected.
The sweet tree blossom looked at you
With a smile so sweet and true,
That all your heart and all your mind
Again to the laughing bloom inclined;
With eyes playfully burning,
Its loving laugh returning.
The gentle bird-ditty,
So lovely, so pretty,
That stirs every feeling,
O'er ears and minds stealing,
Rang from each bush of the summer vale.
The blessed nightingale,
The dearest, sweetest bird on tree,
That ever blessed ought to be,
It sang in the coolness,
With such heartfulness,
That to every noble heart
The sound did joy and glow impart.
And now the whole company,
Full of mirth and in high glee,
Had settled down upon the lawn.
There did every one
As his notion or pleasure bent,
And put up or arranged his tent.
The wealthy were quartered wealthily,
The courtly incomparably;
Some under silk did rest,
Others on the heath gay-drest;
To many the linden gave shadow,
Others housed on the meadow,
Under leaf-green twigs demurely.
Nor guests nor servants, surely,
Rarely were pleasanter
Quartered than they were quartered here.
Plenty was gathered of the best,
Which needful is for mirthful feast,

In way of clothing and eating;
Each his own wants meeting,
From home had brought provender.
King Mark, with regal splendor,
Moreover had provided for them.
Thus they enjoyed in bliss supreme
The gracious time of early spring;
Thus joy the feast to all did bring.
All that ever a curious man
To behold had longed, he then
There could have seen certainly.
One saw there what one liked to see:
Those eyed the pretty women,
These watched the peddling showmen;
Those looked at the dancing,
These at the jousting and lancing.

All that ever heart longed for
Was found there in sufficient store;
And all who were present,
Of joy-ripe years, pleasant
Effort made each to exceed
At every feast in mirthful deed;
And King Mark the good,
The courteous and high of mood,
Not only on this festivity
Had spent his wealth lavishly,
But here did he show men
A wonder of all women,
His sister Blanchefleur,—
A maid more beautiful than e'er
A woman upon earth was seen.
Of her beauty one must say, e'en,
That no living man could gaze
Intently on her glorious face,
But he would higher rank and find
Women and virtue in his mind.

The blessed eye-pleasure
O'er that wide inclosure
Gladdened all of young, fresh blood,
All noble hearts of courteous mood;
And on the lawn could have been seen
Many pretty women then,

Of whom each by her beauty
Should have been queen in duty.
Whoe'er had seen them surely would
Have drawn from such sight fresh bold mood.
Many hearts grew rich with joy.
Now began the great tourney
Of the servants and of the guests.
The boldest and the best
Up and down the track now paced.
Noble Mark ahead e'er raced
With his fellow Riwalin,
Whose knights following close and keen
Their play to guide ever
Did nobly endeavor
In their master's glory,
For future song and story.
Many a horse, in overdress
Of cloth or half silk, in the race
Was seen on the meadow clover;
Many a snow-white cover
There shone, or red, brown, green, or blue;
Others again, for show, wore too
Robes with noble silk worked nice,
Or scalloped in many a quaint device,
Parted, striped, or braided,
Or with trimmings shaded.
Gayly, too, appeared there
Knights of handsome form and fair,
Their armor slit, as if cut to pieces.
Even Spring with its balmy breezes,
King Mark its high favor showed;
For many people in the crowd
Were crowned with wreaths of flowers wrought,
Which, as his offering, Spring had brought.

In such glorious, blessed May,
Began the blessed tourney.
Oft intermixed, the double troop
Rode up this grade, rode down that slope.
This carried they on so long that day,
Till downward swept the glorious play
To where Blanchefleur sat, the sweet,
Whom I as wonder greet,
With pretty women at her side,
To watch the show and the gallant ride;

And how they rode so nobly all,
With carriage imperial,
That many an eye with pleasure lit.
But whatsoever others did,
Still 'twas the courtly Riwalin—
As 'twas, indeed, meet to have been—
Who before all the knighthood rare
Best showed his knightly power there.
The women, too, him notice showed,
And whispered that, in all the crowd,
No one on horse appearing
Rode with such gallant bearing.
They praised that which in him was shown.
«See!» said they,—«see! this youth fine-grown,
This man, is truly glorious!
How gloriously sits all he does,
Sit all movements of his bearing!
How his body is fair-appearing!
How joins with equal grace on him
Each imperial limb!
How evenly his shield is moved!
As if fast-glued, it floats aloft!
How doth the shaft his hand befit!
How well his robes upon him sit!
How stands his head! how glows his hair!
Sweet his behavior he doth wear;
Glorified is his body all!
Ah, happy is the woman who shall
Her bliss owe his sweet body.»

Well pondered this in study
Blanchefleur, the blessed maid;
In her secret heart she had,
Above all knights, addressed to him
Her pleasant thoughts, her wond'rings dim.
She had him in her heart enshrined,
He had around her soul him twined;
He bore upon high throne
The sceptre and the crown
In the kingdom of her heart,
Although the secret she did guard,
And from the world keep, as was fit,
That no one e'er suspected it.

Translation of A. E. Kroeger.

SONG OF HEINRICH VON VELDECHE

No thanks to Tristan that his heart had been
Faithful and true unto his queen;
For thereto did a potion move
More than the power of love:
Sweet thought to me,
That ne'er such cup my lips have prest;
Yet deeper love than ever he
Conceived, dwells in my breast:
So may it be!
So constant may it rest!
Call me but thine
As thou art mine!

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF HEINRICH VON MORUNGEN

My lady dearly loves a pretty bird,
That sings and echoes back her gentle tone;
Were I, too, near her, never should be heard
A songster's note more pleasant than my own,—
Sweeter than sweetest nightingale I'd sing.
For thee, my lady fair,
This yoke of love I bear:
Deign thou to comfort me, and ease my sorrowing.

Were but the troubles of my heart by her
Regarded, I would triumph in my pain;
But her proud heart stands firmly, and the stir
Of passionate grief o'ercomes not her disdain.
Yet, yet I do remember how before
My eyes she stood and spoke,
And on her gentle look
My earnest gaze was fixed: oh, were it so once more!

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF HEINRICH VON MORUNGEN

Mine is the fortune of a simple child,
That in the glass his image looks upon;
And by the shadow of himself beguiled
Breaks quick the brittle charm, and joy is gone.
So gazed I — and I deemed my joy would last —
On the bright image of my lady fair:
But ah! the dream of my delight is past,
And love and rapture yield to dark despair.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF COUNT KRAFT VON TOGGENBURG

Does any one seek the soul of mirth,
Let him hie to the greenwood tree,
And there beneath the verdant shade,
The bloom of the summer see;
For there sing the birds right merrily,
And there will the bounding heart upspring
To the lofty clouds on joyful wing.

On the hedge-rows spring a thousand flowers,
And he from whose heart sweet May
Hath banished care, finds many a joy:
And I too would be gay,
Were the load of pining care away;
Were my lady kind, my soul were light,—
Joy crowning joy would raise its flight. . .

The flowers, leaves, hills, the vale, and mead,
And May with all its light,
Compared with the roses are pale indeed,
Which my lady bears; and bright
My eyes will shine as they meet my sight —
Those beautiful lips of rosy hue,
As red as the rose just steeped in dew.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF STEINMAR

With the graceful corn upspringing,
With the birds around me singing,
With the leaf-crowned forests waving,
Sweet May-dews the herbage laving,
With the flowers that round me bloom,
To my lady dear I'll come:
All things beautiful and bright,
Sweet in sound and fair to sight—
Nothing, nothing is too rare
For my beauteous lady fair;
Everything I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

She is one in whom I find
All things fair and bright combined.
When her beauteous form I see,
Kings themselves might envy me;
Joy with joy is gilded o'er,
Till the heart can hold no more.
She is bright as morning sun,
She my fairest, loveliest one:
For the honor of the fair,
I will sing her beauty rare;
Everything I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

Solace me, then, sweetest!—be
Such in heart as I to thee;
Ope thy beauteous lips of love,
Call me thine, and then above
Merrily, merrily I will sail
With the light clouds on the gale.
Dear one, deign my heart to bless!
Steer me on to happiness!
Thou, in whom my soul confideth,
Thou, whose love my spirit guideth!
Everything I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF THE «MARNER»

MARIA! Virgin! mother! comforter
Of sinners! queen of saints in heaven that are!
Thy beauty round the eternal throne doth cast
A brightness that outshines its living rays;
There in the fullness of transcendent joy
Heaven's King and thou sit in bright majesty:
Would I were there, a welcomed guest at last
Where angel tongues re-echo praise to praise!
There Michael sings the blessed Savior's name,
Till round the eternal throne it rings once more,
And angels in their choirs with glad acclaim,
Triumphant host, their joyful praises pour;
There thousand years than days more short appear,
Such joy from God doth flow and from that mother dear.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

ABSENCE

(ANONYMOUS)

IF I a small bird were,
And little wings might bear,
I'd fly to thee;
But vain those wishes are:
Here, then, my rest shall be.

When far from thee I bide,
In dreams still at thy side
I've talked with thee;
And when I woke, I sighed,
Myself alone to see.

No hour of wakeful night
But teems with thoughts of light,—
Sweet thoughts of thee,—
As when, in hours more bright,
Thou gav'st thy heart to me.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF CONRAD VON WÜRZBURG

See how from the meadows pass
Brilliant flowers and verdant grass;
All their hues now they lose: o'er them hung,
Mournful robes the woods invest,
Late with leafy honors drest.
Yesterday the roses gay blooming sprung,
Beauteously the fields adorning;
Now their sallow branches fail:
Wild her tuneful notes at morning
Sung the lovely nightingale;
Now in woe, mournful, low, is her song.

Nor for lily nor rose sighs he,
Nor for birds' sweet harmony,
He to whom winter's gloom brings delight:
Seated by his leman dear,
He forgets the altered year;
Sweetly glide at eventide the moments bright.
Better this than culling posies:
For his lady's love he deems
Sweeter than the sweetest roses;
Little he the swain esteems
Not possessing that best blessing — love's delight.

Translation of Edgar Taylor.

SONG OF JOHANN HADLOUB

Far as I journey from my lady fair,
I have a messenger who quickly goes,
Morning, and noon, and at the evening's close:
Where'er she wanders, he pursues her there.
A restless, faithful, secret messenger
Well may he be, who, from my heart of hearts,
Charged with love's deepest secrets, thus departs,
And wings his way to her!
'Tis every thought I form that doth pursue
Thee, lady fair!
Ah! would that there
My wearied self had leave to follow too!

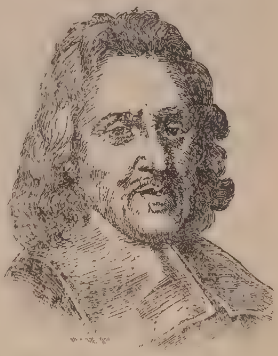
Translation of Edgar Taylor.

IZAAK WALTON

(1593-1683)

BY HENRY VAN DYKE

Of THE life of Master Izaak Walton, angler, author, and linen-draper, but little is known, and all to his credit. In a life so sparingly diversified with events, the biographer is divided in his mind between regret that the material for narration is so small, and gratitude that the picture of a good man's character and peaceful occupation stands out so clear and untroubled.



IZAAK WALTON

Izaak Walton was born at the town of Stafford, in the English county of the same name, in August 1593. Of his education he speaks with becoming modesty; and it is probable that it was slight, for at the age of nineteen years he was engaged in retail trade in London. His first shop was in the Royal Burse, Cornhill, and was only «seven and a half feet long by five feet wide.» But he seems to have done a good business at this humble stand; for in 1624 he had a larger shop in Fleet Street, and in 1632 he bought a lease of a house and shop in Chancery Lane, where his occupation is described as that of a «sempster» or «milliner.»

It is certain that he did not live for his trade, though he lived by it; for as early as 1619 we find a book of verse, 'The Love of Amos and Laura,' dedicated to him as a person of acknowledged taste and skill in letters. The friendships which he formed with Dr. John Donne the metaphysical preacher and poet, with Sir Henry Wotton the witty and honest ambassador, with the learned John Hales of Eton College, and with many other persons of like ability and distinction, prove him to have been a man of singular intelligence, amiable character, and engaging conversation. In some of these friendships, no doubt, the love of angling — to which recreation he was attached by a pure and temperate and enduring passion — was either the occasion of intimacy or the promoter of it. For it has often been observed that this gentle sport inclines the hearts of those that practice it to friendliness; and there are no closer or more lasting companionships than such as are formed beside flowing streams by men who «study to be quiet and go a-fishing.» And this Walton did, as we know from his own testimony. He turned from the hooks and eyes of his shop to cast the hook for the nimble trout or the sluggish chub, in the waters of the Lea, or of the New River, with such cheerful comrades as honest Nat. and R. Roe; «but they are gone,» he adds, «and with them most of my pleasant hours, even as a shadow that passeth away and returns not.»

In 1626 he married Rachel Floud, a great-great-niece of Archbishop Cranmer. She died in 1640, leaving a child who survived her but two years.

In 1643, about the beginning of the Civil War,—which he deplored and reprobated with as much bitterness as was possible to a man of his gentle disposition,—he retired from business with a modest fortune, and purchased a small estate near his native town, in the heart of rural England and in the neighborhood of good fishing. Here he lived in peace and quietness, passing much of his time as a welcome visitor in the families of eminent clergymen; «of whom,» says the gossipy old chronicler Anthony Wood, «he was much beloved.»

About 1646 he married again; the bride being a lady of discreet age,—not less than thirty-five years,—and a stepsister of Thomas Ken, who afterwards became the beloved Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the honored author of the ‹Evening Hymn,› with many other pieces of sacred poetry. This is the lady who is spoken of so pleasantly as «Kenna» in ‹The Angler's Wish,› Walton's best poem. She died in 1662, leaving two children: a son, Izaak Walton Jr., who lived a useful, tranquil life and died unmarried; and a daughter who became the wife of the Rev. Dr. William Hawkins, a prebendary in the Church of Winchester, in whose house Walton died.

With such close and constant associations among the clergy, it was but natural that Walton's first essay in literature should have an ecclesiastical flavor. It was ‹The Life of Dr. John Donne,› prefixed to the sermons of that noted divine and difficult poet,—which were published in 1640, while Walton was still keeping shop in London. The brief biography was a very remarkable piece of work for an untried author; and gave evidence of a hand that, however it may have acquired its skill, was able to modulate the harmonies of English prose, with a rare and gentle charm, to a familiar tune,—the praise of piety and benevolence and humbleness,—and yet with such fresh and simple turns of humor and tenderness as delight the heart while they satisfy the judgment.

Walton speaks, in the preface to this ‹Life,› of his «artless pencil.» But in truth it was the *ars celare artem* that belonged to him. His writing shows that final and admirable simplicity which is always the result of patient toil and the delicate, loving choice of words. When, for example, he speaks of Master Donne as proceeding in a certain search «with all moderate haste,» or of his behavior «which, when it would entice, had a strange kind of elegant irresistible art»; or when he says of his relation to the Society of Benchers of Lincoln's Inn, that it was «a love-strife of desert and liberality»; or when he describes «that last hour of his last day, as his body melted away and vapored into spirit,»—he writes as one who understands and respects the mysteries of language and the value of exquisite expression.

The series of biographies (all too few) in which he embalmed the good memories of Sir Henry Wotton (1651), the Judicious Mr. Richard Hooker (1662), the Sacred Poet George Herbert (1670), and the Devout Bishop Sanderson (1678), are adorned with some of the most quaintly charming passages of prose to be found in English literature; and illuminated by a spirit of sincere charity and pious affection (except towards the Scotch and the Commonwealth-men), which causes them to shine with a mild and steady lustre, like lamps hung by grateful hands before the shrines of friendly and familiar saints. Walton's ‹Lives,› if he had written nothing else, would give him a fair title to a place in a library of the world's best literature.

But his chief claim upon immortality, in the popular estimation, rests on a work of another character. In ‹The Complete Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation,› Walton doubtless aimed at nothing more than a small book of instruction in the secrets of his beloved art; with which he mixed, as he says, «in several places, not any scurrility, but some innocent harmless mirth, of which if thou be a severe, sour-complexioned man, then I here disallow thee to be a competent judge; for divines say, there are offenses given, and offenses not given but taken.» But in thus making a recreation of his recreation, a fortunate fisherman's luck befell him. Like a man who in casting the fly for trout hooks a lordly salmon (and this happy accident occurred to a friend of mine only the other day, but sadly enough the salmon was not landed),—even so, Walton, in seeking to win the approbation and gratitude of a little peaceable brotherhood of anglers in the troubled age of Oliver Cromwell, caught and kept the thankful admiration and praise of many generations of readers. I think it likely that no one could be more surprised at this unlooked-for but well-deserved result than himself; or more thankful for the success which gave to his favorite sport the singular honor of having inspired a classic in literature.

‹The Complete Angler› must have been begun not long after his retirement from business, for it was ready to be printed in 1650. But the first edition did not appear until 1653. The second followed in 1655; the third in 1661; the fourth in 1668; and the fifth, which was the last printed during the author's lifetime, in 1676. In all of these new editions, except the third, there were many alterations and enlargements; for Walton labored assiduously to perfect what he had written, and the changes, even the slightest, display the care of a scrupulous and affectionate workman in words. In the fifth edition a Second Part was added, consisting of ‘Instructions How to Angle for a Trout or Grayling in a Clear Stream.’ This was written by Charles Cotton, Esquire, of Beresford Hall, in imitation of his master's manner, but at a considerable distance. Since that time more than a hundred editions of the book have been published, of all shapes and sizes, from the tiny 48mo of Pickering to the imperial octavo of Sir Harris Nicolas; so that a man can choose whether he will read Old Izaak in large print from a broad-margined page on a library table, or carry him in his pocket as Washington Irving did, and read him under a beech-tree, in a green meadow just by a spring of pure sweet water.

The value of ‘The Complete Angler’ at this day is not to be looked for in its completeness. In its time, no doubt, it gave much new and curious instruction to the novice in the art; for Walton was unrivaled in his skill with bait, and Thomas Barker, the retired cook and active humorist who helped him in his discourse upon artificial flies, was an adept in that kind of angling. But most of these instructions, and likewise the scientific dissertations upon fish and fish-ponds, have long since gone out of date; and the book now belongs to the literature of power rather than of knowledge. Its unfailing charm lies in its descriptions of the country and of country life; in its quaint pastoral scenes, like the episode of the milkmaid, and the convocation of gipsies; and in its constant, happy exhortations to contentment, humility, and a virtuous, placid temper.

The form of the book is a dialogue, in which at first the respective merits of hunting, hawking, and angling are disputed; and then the discourse falls chiefly into the mouth of Piscator, who expounds the angler's contemplative sport to Venator, who has become his willing and devoted pupil. The manner of writing is sincere, colloquial, unaffected, yet not undignified; it is full of digressions, which like the footpaths on a journey are the pleasantest parts of all; it is an easy, unconstrained, rambling manner, yet always sure-footed, as the step of one who has walked so long beside the streams that he can move forward safely without looking at the ground, while his eyes follow the water and the rising fish. In short, the book has that rare and imperishable quality called style: a quality easily recognized but hardly defined; a quality which in its essence, whatever its varying forms may be, is always neither more nor less than the result of such a loving mastery of the true proprieties of language as will permit the mind and spirit of a man to shine with lucid clearness through his words.

Thus Izaak Walton shines through 'The Complete Angler.' An honest, kindly man; a man satisfied with his modest place in the world, and never doubting that it was a good world, or that God made it; an amicable man, not without his prejudices and superstitions, yet well pleased that every reader should enjoy his own opinion; a musical, cheerful man, delighting in the songs of birds and making melody in his heart to God; a loyal, steadfast man, not given to changing his mind, nor his ways, nor his friends; a patient, faithful, gentle man,—that was Walton. Thus he fished tranquilly and without offense through the stormy years of the Civil War, and the Rump Parliament, and the Commonwealth, wishing that all men would beat their swords into fish-hooks and cast their leaden bullets into sinkers. Thus he died, on December 15th, 1683, being ninety years of age and in charity with all men. Few writers are more deserving of an earthly immortality, and none more certain of a heavenly one.

Henry van Dyke

FROM THE 'LIFE OF MR. RICHARD HOOKER'

I return to Mr. Hooker in his college, where he continued his studies with all quietness for the space of three years; about which time he entered into sacred orders, being then made deacon and priest, and not long after was appointed to preach at St. Paul's Cross.

In order to which sermon, to London he came, and immediately to the Shunamite's House; which is a house so called for that, besides the stipend paid the preacher, there is provision made also for his lodging and diet for two days before and one day after his sermon. This house was then kept by John Churchman, sometime a draper of good note in Watling-street, upon whom poverty had at last come like an armed man, and brought him into a necessitous condition: which, though it be a punishment, is not always an argument of God's disfavor; for he was a virtuous man. I shall not yet give the like testimony of his wife, but leave the reader to judge by what follows. But to this house Mr. Hooker came so wet, so weary, and weather-beaten, that he was never known to express more passion than against a friend that dissuaded him from footing it to London, and for finding him no easier an horse,—supposing the horse trotted when he did not;—and at this time also, such a faintness and fear possessed him, that he would not be persuaded two days' rest and quietness, or any other means, could be used to make him able to preach his Sunday's sermon; but a warm bed, and rest, and drink proper for a cold, given him by Mrs. Churchman, and her diligent attendance added unto it, enabled him to perform the office of the day, which was in or about the year 1581.

And in this first public appearance to the world, he was not so happy as to be free from exceptions against a point of doctrine delivered in his sermon; which was, "That in God there were two wills, an antecedent and a consequent will: his first will, That all mankind should be saved; but his second will was, That those only should be saved that did live answerable to that degree of grace which he had offered or afforded them." This seemed to cross a late opinion of Mr. Calvin's, and then taken for granted by many that had not a capacity to examine it; as it had been by him before, and hath been since by Master Henry Mason, Dr. Jackson, Dr. Hammond, and others of great learning, who believe that a contrary opinion intrenches upon the honor and justice of our merciful God. How he justified this I will not undertake to declare; but it was not excepted against—as Mr. Hooker declares in his rational Answer to Mr. Travers—by John Elmer, then bishop of London, at this time one of his auditors, and at last one of his advocates too, when Mr. Hooker was accused for it.

But the justifying of this doctrine did not prove of so bad consequence as the kindness of Mrs. Churchman's curing him of his late distemper and cold; for that was so gratefully apprehended by Mr. Hooker that he thought himself bound in conscience to believe all that she said: so that the good man came to be persuaded by her, "that he was a man of a tender constitution; and that it was best for him to have a wife, that might prove a nurse to him: such a one as might both prolong his life, and make it more comfortable; and such a one she could and would provide for him, if he thought fit to marry." And he, not considering that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," but like a true Nathaniel, fearing no guile because he meant none, did give such a power as Eleazar was trusted with,—you may read it in the book of Genesis,—when he was sent to choose a wife for Isaac; for even so he trusted her to choose for him, promising upon a fair summons to return to London and accept of her choice; and he did so in that, or about the year following. Now the wife provided for him was her daughter Joan, who brought him neither beauty nor portion; and for her conditions, they were too like that wife's which is by Solomon compared to a dripping house: so that the good man had no reason to "rejoice in the wife of his youth"; but too just cause to say with the holy Prophet, "Woe is me that I am constrained to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar!"

This choice of Mr. Hooker's—if it were his choice—may be wondered at: but let us consider that the Prophet Ezekiel says, "There is a wheel within a wheel;" a secret sacred wheel of Providence,—most visible in marriages,—guided by His hand that "allows not the race to the swift," nor "bread to the wise," nor good wives to good men: and He that can bring good out of evil—for mortals are blind to this reason—only knows why this blessing was denied to patient Job, to meek Moses, and to our as meek and patient Mr. Hooker. But so it was: and let the reader cease to wonder, for affliction is a Divine diet; which though it be not pleasing to mankind, yet Almighty God hath often, very often, imposed it as good though bitter physic to those children whose souls are dearest to him.

And by this marriage the good man was drawn from the tranquillity of his college; from that garden of piety, of pleasure, of peace, and a sweet conversation, into the thorny wilderness of a busy world, into those corroding cares that attend a married priest and a country parsonage: which was Drayton-Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire, not far from Aylesbury, and in the diocese of Lincoln; to which he was presented by John Cheney, Esq.—then patron of it—the 9th of December, 1584, where he behaved himself so as to give no occasion of evil, but as St. Paul adviseth a minister of God—"in much patience, in afflictions, in anguishes, in necessities, in poverty, and no doubt in long-suffering"; yet troubling no man with his discontents and wants. And in this condition he continued about a year, in which time his two pupils, Edwin Sandys and George Cranmer, took a journey to see their tutor: where they found him with a book in his hand,—it was the Odes of Horace,—he being then like humble and innocent Abel, tending his small allotment of sheep in a common field; which he told his pupils he was forced to do then, for that his servant was gone home to dine, and assist his wife to do some necessary household business. But when his servant returned and released him, then his two pupils attended him unto his house, where their best entertainment was his quiet company, which was presently denied them; for Richard was called to rock the cradle: and the rest of their welcome was so like this, that they stayed but till the next morning, which was time enough to discover and pity their tutor's condition; and they having in that time rejoiced in the remembrance, and then paraphrased on many of the innocent recreations of their younger days, and other like diversions, and thereby given him as much present comfort as they were able, they were forced to leave him to the company of his wife Joan, and seek themselves a quieter lodging for next night. But at their parting from him, Mr. Cranmer said, "Good tutor, I am sorry your lot is fallen in no better ground, as to your parsonage; and more sorry that your wife proves not a more comfortable companion, after you have wearied yourself in your restless studies." To whom the good man replied, "My dear George, if saints have usually a double share in the miseries of this life, I, that am none, ought not to repine at what my wise Creator hath appointed for me; but labor—as indeed I do daily—to submit mine to his will, and possess my soul in patience and peace."

FROM THE ‹LIFE OF MR. GEORGE HERBERT›

I SHALL now proceed to his marriage; in order to which it will be convenient that I first give the reader a short view of his person, and then an account of his wife, and of some circumstances concerning both. He was for his person of a stature inclining toward tallness; his body was very straight, and so far from being cumbered with too much flesh, that he was lean to an extremity. His aspect was cheerful, and his speech and motion did both declare him a gentleman; for they were all so meek and obliging that they purchased love and respect from all that knew him.

These and his other visible virtues begot him much love from a gentleman of a noble fortune, and a near kinsman to his friend the Earl of Danby; namely, from Mr. Charles Danvers of Bainton, in the County of Wilts, Esq. This Mr. Danvers, having known him long and familiarly, did so much affect him that he often and publicly declared a desire that Mr. Herbert would marry any of his nine daughters,—for he had so many,—but rather his daughter Jane than any other, because Jane was his beloved daughter. And he had often said the same to Mr. Herbert himself; and that if he could like her for a wife, and she him for a husband, Jane should have a double blessing: and Mr. Danvers had so often said the like to Jane, and so much commended Mr. Herbert to her, that Jane became so much a platonic as to fall in love with Mr. Herbert unseen.

This was a fair preparation for a marriage: but alas! her father died before Mr. Herbert's retirement to Dauntsey; yet some friends to both parties procured their meeting, at which time a mutual affection entered into both their hearts, as a conqueror enters into a surprised city: and love having got such possession, governed, and made there such laws and resolutions as neither party was able to resist; insomuch that she changed her name into Herbert the third day after this first interview.

This haste might in others be thought a love-frenzy or worse: but it was not, for they had wooed so like princes as to have select proxies; such as were true friends to both parties, such as well understood Mr. Herbert's and her temper of mind, and also their estates, so well before this interview, that the suddenness was justifiable by the strictest rules of prudence: and the more because it proved so happy to both parties; for the eternal lover of mankind made them happy in each other's mutual and equal affections and compliance: indeed, so happy that there never was any opposition betwixt them, unless it were a contest which should most incline to a compliance with the other's desires. And though this begot, and continued in them, such a mutual love, and joy, and content, as was no way defective; yet this mutual content, and love, and joy did receive a daily augmentation, by such daily obligingness to each other, as still added such new affluences to the former fullness of these divine souls as was only improvable in heaven, where they now enjoy it.

FROM ‹THE COMPLEAT ANGLER›

PISCATOR — O sir, doubt not that angling is an art: is it not an art to deceive a trout with an artificial fly? a trout that is more sharp-sighted than any hawk you have named, and more watchful and timorous than your high-mettled merlin is bold; and yet I doubt not to catch a brace or two to-morrow for a friend's breakfast. Doubt not, therefore, sir, but that angling is an art, and an art worth your learning. The question is rather, whether you be capable of learning it? for angling is somewhat like poetry,— men are to be born so: I mean, with inclinations to it, though both may be heightened by discourse and practice; but he that hopes to be a good angler must not only bring an inquiring, searching, observing wit, but he must bring a large measure of hope and patience, and a love and propensity to the art itself; but having once got and practiced it, then doubt not but angling will prove to be so pleasant that it will prove to be like virtue, a reward to itself.

Venator — Sir, I am now become so full of expectation, that I long much to have you proceed, and in the order you propose.

Piscator — Then first, for the antiquity of angling, of which I shall not say much, but only this: some say it is as ancient as Deucalion's flood; others, that Belus, who was the first inventor of godly and virtuous recreations, was the first inventor of angling; and some others say — for former times have had their disquisitions about the antiquity of it — that Seth, one of the sons of Adam, taught it to his sons, and that by them it was derived to posterity; others say that he left it engraven on those pillars which he erected, and trusted to preserve the knowledge of the mathematics, music, and the rest of that precious knowledge and those useful arts, which by God's appointment or allowance and his noble industry were thereby preserved from perishing in Noah's flood.

These, sir, have been the opinions of several men that have possibly endeavored to make angling more ancient than is needful, or may well be warranted; but for my part, I shall content myself in telling you that angling is much more ancient than the Incarnation of our Savior: for in the prophet Amos, mention is made of fish-hooks; and in the book of Job, which was long before the days of Amos,— for that book is said to be writ by

Moses,—mention is made also of fish-hooks, which must imply anglers in those times.

But, my worthy friend, as I would rather prove myself a gentleman by being learned and humble, valiant and inoffensive, virtuous and communicable, than by any fond ostentation of riches; or, wanting those virtues myself, boast that these were in my ancestors (and yet I grant that where a noble and ancient descent and such merit meet in any man, it is a double dignification of that person);—so if this antiquity of angling, which for my part I have not forced, shall, like an ancient family, be either an honor or an ornament to this virtuous art which I profess to love and practice, I shall be the gladder that I made an accidental mention of the antiquity of it, of which I shall say no more, but proceed to that just commendation which I think it deserves.

And for that, I shall tell you that in ancient times a debate hath arisen, and it remains yet unresolved: whether the happiness of man in this world doth consist more in contemplation or action?

Concerning which, some have endeavored to maintain their opinion of the first, by saying that the nearer we mortals come to God by way of imitation, the more happy we are. And they say that God enjoys himself only by a contemplation of his own infiniteness, eternity, power, and goodness, and the like. And upon this ground, many cloisteral men of great learning and devotion prefer contemplation before action. And many of the fathers seem to approve this opinion, as may appear in their commentaries upon the words of our Savior to Martha (Luke x. 41, 42).

And on the contrary, there want not men of equal authority and credit, that prefer action to be the more excellent: as namely, experiments in physic, and the application of it, both for the ease and prolongation of man's life; by which each man is enabled to act and do good to others, either to serve his country or do good to particular persons. And they say also that action is doctrinal, and teaches both art and virtue, and is a maintainer of human society; and for these, and other like reasons, to be preferred before contemplation.

Concerning which two opinions, I shall forbear to add a third by declaring my own; and rest myself contented in telling you, my very worthy friend, that both these meet together, and do most properly belong to the most honest, ingenious, quiet, and harmless art of angling.

And first I shall tell you what some have observed, and I have found it to be a real truth,—that the very sitting by the river's side is not only the quietest and fittest place for contemplation, but will invite an angler to it; and this seems to be maintained by the learned Peter Du Moulin, who in his discourse of the fulfilling of prophecies, observes that when God intended to reveal any future events or high notions to his prophets, he then carried them either to the deserts or the sea-shore, that having so separated them from amidst the press of people and business, and the cares of the world, he might settle their mind in a quiet repose, and there make them fit for revelation.

And this seems also to be intimated by the Children of Israel (Psalm cxxxvii.), who having in a sad condition banished all mirth and music from their pensive hearts, and having hung up their then mute harps upon the willow-trees growing by the rivers of Babylon, sat down upon these banks, bemoaning the ruins of Sion, and contemplating their own sad condition.

And an ingenious Spaniard says that "rivers and the inhabitants of the watery element were made for wise men to contemplate, and fools to pass by without consideration." And though I will not rank myself in the number of the first, yet give me leave to free myself from the last, by offering to you a short contemplation, first of rivers and then of fish: concerning which I doubt not but to give you many observations that will appear very considerable; I am sure they have appeared so to me, and made many an hour to pass away more pleasantly, as I have sat quietly on a flowery bank by a calm river.

PISCATOR — And now you shall see me try my skill to catch a trout; and at my next walking, either this evening or to-morrow morning, I will give you direction how you yourself shall fish for him.

Venator — Trust me, master, I see now it is a harder matter to catch a trout than a chub; for I have put on patience and followed you these two hours, and not seen a fish stir, neither at your minnow nor your worm.

Piscator — Well, scholar, you must endure worse luck some time, or you will never make a good angler. But what say you now? There is a trout now, and a good one too, if I can but hold him, and two or three turns more will tire him. Now you see he lies still, and the sleight is to land him. Reach me that landing-net; — so, sir, now he is mine own. What say you now? is not this worth all my labor and your patience?

Venator — On my word, master, this is a gallant trout: what shall we do with him?

Piscator — Marry, e'en eat him to supper: we'll go to my hostess, from whence we came; she told me as I was going out of door, that my brother Peter, a good angler and a cheerful companion, had sent word that he would lodge there to-night, and bring a friend with him. My hostess has two beds, and I know you and I may have the best; we'll rejoice with my brother Peter and his friend, tell tales or sing ballads, or make a catch, or find some harmless sport to content us and pass away a little time, without offense to God or man.

Venator — A match, good master: let's go to that house; for the linen looks white and smells of lavender, and I long to lie in a pair of sheets that smells so. Let's be going, good master, for I am hungry again with fishing.

Piscator — Nay, stay a little, good scholar. I caught my last trout with a worm; now I will put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an hour about yonder trees for another: and so walk towards our lodging. Look you, scholar, thereabout we shall have a bite presently or not at all. Have with you, sir! o' my word I have hold of him. Oh! it is a great logger-headed chub; come hang him upon that willow twig, and let's be going. But turn out of the way a little, good scholar, towards yonder high honeysuckle hedge; there we'll sit and sing whilst this shower falls so gently upon the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these verdant meadows.

Look! under that broad beech-tree I sat down, when I was last this way a-fishing. And the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill. There I sat viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea; yet sometimes opposed by rugged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves and turned them into foam. And sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs; some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun; and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet hath happily expressed it,

"I was for that time lifted above earth,
And possessed joys not promised in my birth."

As I left this place and entered into the next field, a second pleasure entertained me: 'twas a handsome milkmaid, that had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men too often do; but she cast away all care, and sang like a nightingale: her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it: it was that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlowe, now at least fifty years ago; and the milkmaid's mother sang an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days.

They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good; I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Look yonder! on my word, yonder they both be a-milking again. I will give her the chub, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

God speed you, good woman! I have been a-fishing, and am going to Bleak Hall to my bed; and having caught more fish than will sup myself and friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none.

Milk-Woman — Marry, God requite you, sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully: and if you come this way a-fishing two months hence, a grace of God, I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice in a new-made haycock for it, and my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads; for she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men: in the mean time will you drink a draught of red cow's milk? you shall have it freely.

Piscator — No, I thank you: but I pray, do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt; it is but to sing us a song that was sung by your daughter when I last passed over this meadow, about eight or nine days since.

Milk-Woman — What song was it, I pray? Was it 'Come, shepherds, deck your heads,' or 'As at noon Dulcina rested,' or 'Phillida flouts me,' or 'Chevy Chace,' or 'Johnny Armstrong,' or 'Troy Town'?

Piscator — No, it is none of those; it is a song that your daughter sang the first part, and you sang the answer to it.

Milk-Woman—Oh, I know it now. I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter; and the latter part, which indeed fits me best now, but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me: but you shall, God willing, hear them both, and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers.

Piscator—And now, scholar, I think it will be time to repair to our angle-rods, which we left in the water to fish for themselves: and you shall choose which shall be yours; and it is an even lay one of them catches.

And let me tell you, this kind of fishing with a dead rod, and laying night-hooks, are like putting money to use: for they both work for the owners, when they do nothing but sleep, or eat, or rejoice; as you know we have done this last hour, and sat as quietly and as free from cares under this sycamore, as Virgil's Tityrus and his Melibœus did under their broad beech-tree. No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams, which we now see glide so quietly by us. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of angling as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries, "Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did;" and so, if I might be judge, "God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling."

I'll tell you, scholar, when I sat last on this primrose bank, and looked down these meadows, I thought of them as Charles the Emperor did of the city of Florence, "that they were too pleasant to be looked on but only on holidays." As I then sat on this very grass, I turned my present thoughts into verse: 'twas a wish, which I'll repeat to you.

THE ANGLER'S WISH

I in these flowery meads would be:
These crystal streams should solace me;
To whose harmonious bubbling noise
I with my angle would rejoice,
    Sit here, and see the turtle-dove
    Court his chaste mate to acts of love;

Or on that bank, feel the west wind
Breathe health and plenty; please my mind,
To see sweet dewdrops kiss these flowers,
And then washed off by April showers:
  Here, hear my Kenna sing a song;
  There, see a blackbird feed her young,

Or a leverock build her nest;
Here, give my weary spirits rest,
And raise my low-pitched thoughts above
Earth, or what poor mortals love:
  Thus free from lawsuits and the noise
  Of princes' courts, I would rejoice:

Or with my Bryan and a book,
Loiter long days near Shawford brook;
There sit by him, and eat my meat;
There see the sun both rise and set;
There bid good-morning to next day;
There meditate my time away:
  And angle on, and beg to have
  A quiet passage to a welcome grave.

When I had ended this composure, I left this place, and saw a brother of the angle sit under that honeysuckle hedge, one that will prove worth your acquaintance: I sat down by him, and presently we met with an accidental piece of merriment, which I will relate to you; for it rains still.

On the other side of this very hedge sat a gang of gipsies, and near to them sat a gang of beggars. The gipsies were then to divide all the money that had been got that week, either by stealing linen or poultry, or by fortune-telling, or legerdemain, or indeed by any other sleights or secrets belonging to their mysterious government. And the sum that was got that week proved to be but twenty and some odd shillings. The odd money was agreed to be distributed amongst the poor of their own corporation; and for the remaining twenty shillings, that was to be divided unto four gentlemen gipsies, according to their several degrees in their commonwealth.

And the first or chiefest gipsy was, by consent, to have a third part of the 20*s.*, which all men know is 6*s.* 8*d.*

The second was to have a fourth part of the 20*s.*, which all men know to be 5*s.*

The third was to have a fifth part of the 20*s.*, which all men know to be 4*s.*

The fourth and last gipsy was to have a sixth part of the 20*s.*, which all men know to be 3*s.* 4*d.*

As for example,—

3 times 6*s.* 8*d.* is 20*s.*
And so is 4 times 5*s.* . 20*s.*
And so is 5 times 4*s.* . 20*s.*
And so is 6 times 3*s.* 4*d.* . 20*s.*

And yet he that divided the money was so very a gipsy, that though he gave to every one these said sums, yet he kept 1*s.* of it for himself.

As for example,—

	s.	*d.*
	6	8
	5	0
	4	0
	3	4
make but	19	0

But now you shall know that when the four gipsies saw that he had got 1*s.* by dividing the money, though not one of them knew any reason to demand more, yet, like lords and courtiers, every gipsy envied him that was the gainer, and wrangled with him, and every one said the remaining shilling belonged to him: and so they fell to so high a contest about it, as none that knows the faithfulness of one gipsy to another will easily believe: only we that have lived these last twenty years are certain that money has been able to do much mischief. However, the gipsies were too wise to go to law, and did therefore choose their choice friends Rook and Shark, and our late English Gusman, to be their arbitrators and umpires; and so they left this honeysuckle hedge, and went to tell fortunes, and cheat, and get more money and lodging in the next village.

When these were gone, we heard a high contention amongst the beggars, whether it was easiest to rip a cloak or to unrip a cloak. One beggar affirmed it was all one. But that was denied by asking her if doing and undoing were all one. Then another said 'twas easiest to unrip a cloak, for that was to let it alone. But she was answered by asking her how she unripped it if she let it alone; and she confessed herself mistaken. These and twenty such-like questions were proposed, and answered with as much beggarly logic and earnestness as was ever heard to proceed from the mouth of the most pertinacious schismatic; and sometimes all the beggars, whose number was neither more nor less than the poet's nine Muses, talked together about this ripping and unripping, and so loud that not one heard what the other said: but at last one beggar craved audience, and told them that old Father Clause, whom Ben Jonson, in his 'Beggar's Bush,' created king of their corporation, was to lodge at an alehouse called "Catch-her-by-the-way," not far from Waltham Cross, and in the high-road towards London: and he therefore desired them to spend no more time about that and such-like questions, but refer all to Father Clause at night, for he was an upright judge; and in the meantime draw cuts, what song should be next sung and who should sing it. They all agreed to the motion; and the lot fell to her that was the youngest and veriest virgin of the company. And she sang Frank Davison's song, which he made forty years ago; and all the others of the company joined to sing the burthen with her.

Piscator — Well, scholar, having now taught you to paint your rod, and we having still a mile to Tottenham High Cross, I will, as we walk towards it, in the cool shade of this sweet honeysuckle hedge, mention to you some of the thoughts and joys that have possessed my soul since we two met together. And these thoughts shall be told you, that you also may join with me in thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for our happiness. And that our present happiness may appear to be the greater, and we the more thankful for it, I will beg you to consider with me how many do, even at this very time, lie under the torment of the stone, the gout, and toothache; and this we are free from. And every misery that I miss is a new mercy, and therefore let us be thankful. There have been, since we met, others that have met disasters of broken limbs; some have been blasted, others thunderstrucken: and we have been freed from these, and all those many other miseries that threaten human nature; let us therefore rejoice and be thankful. Nay, which is a far greater mercy, we are free from the unsupportable burthen of an accusing tormenting conscience, a misery that none can bear; and therefore let us praise Him for his preventing grace, and say, Every misery that I miss is a new mercy. Nay, let me tell you there be many that have forty times our estates, that would give the greatest part of it to be healthful and cheerful like us: who, with the expense of a little money, have eat and drank, and laught, and angled, and sung, and slept securely; and rose next day, and cast away care, and sung, and laught, and angled again: which are blessings rich men cannot purchase with all their money. Let me tell you, scholar, I have a rich neighbor that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money: he is still drudging on, and says that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich;" and it is true indeed: but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy; for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, that "There be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side them:" and yet God deliver us from pinching poverty; and grant that having a competency, we may be content and thankful. Let not us repine, or so much as think the gifts of God unequally dealt, if we see another abound with riches; when, as God knows, the cares that are the keys that keep those riches hang often so heavily at the rich man's girdle, that they clog him with weary days and restless nights, even when others sleep quietly. We see but the outside of the rich man's happiness: few consider him to be like the silkworm, that when she seems to play, is at the very same time spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself; and this many rich men do, loading themselves with corroding cares to keep what they have probably unconscionably got. Let us therefore be thankful for health and a competence, and above all, for a quiet conscience.

Let me tell you, scholar, that Diogenes walked on a day, with his friend, to see a country fair; where he saw ribbons and looking-glasses, and nut-crackers, and fiddles, and hobby-horses, and many other gimcracks: and having observed them, and all the other finnimbruns that make a complete country fair, he said to his friend, "Lord, how many things are there in this world of which Diogenes hath no need!" And truly it is so, or might be so, with very many who vex and toil themselves to get what they have no need of. Can any man charge God that he hath not given him enough to make his life happy? No, doubtless; for nature is content with a little. And yet you shall hardly meet with a man that complains not of some want: though he indeed wants nothing but his will; it may be, nothing but his will of his poor neighbor, for not worshiping or not flattering him: and thus when we might be happy and quiet, we create trouble to ourselves. I have heard of a man that was angry with himself because he was no taller; and of a woman that broke her looking-glass because it would not show her face to be as young and handsome as her next neighbor's was. And I knew another to whom God had given health and plenty, but a wife that nature had made peevish, and her husband's riches had made purse-proud: and must, because she was rich, and for no other virtue, sit in the highest pew in the church; which being denied her, she engaged her husband into a contention for it, and at last into a lawsuit with a dogged neighbor, who was as rich as he, and had a wife as peevish and purse-proud as the other; and this lawsuit begot higher oppositions, and actionable words, and more vexations and lawsuits: for you must remember that both were rich, and must therefore have their will. Well, this willful, purse-proud lawsuit lasted during the life of the first husband; after which his wife vext and chid, and chid and vext till she also chid and vext herself into the grave: and so the wealth of these poor rich people was curst into a punishment, because they wanted meek and thankful hearts; for those only can make us happy. I knew a man that had health and riches, and several houses all beautiful and ready furnished, and would often trouble himself and family to be removing from one house to another; and being asked by a friend why he removed so often from one house to another, replied, « It was to find content in some one of them.» But his friend, knowing his temper, told him, if he would find content in any of his houses, he must leave himself behind him; for content will never dwell but in a meek and quiet soul. And this may appear, if we read and consider what our Savior says in St. Matthew's Gospel; for he there says: « Blessed be the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.» And « Blessed be the meek, for they shall possess the earth.» Not that the meek shall not also obtain mercy, and see God, and be comforted, and at last come to the kingdom of heaven; but in the mean time he, and he only, possesses the earth as he goes towards that kingdom of heaven, by being humble and cheerful, and content with what his good God has allotted him. He has no turbulent, repining, vexatious thoughts that he deserves better; nor is vext when he sees others possest of more honor or more riches than his wise God has allotted for his share: but he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness,—such a quietness as makes his very dreams pleasing, both to God and himself.

My honest scholar, all this is told to incline you to thankfulness; and to incline you the more, let me tell you that though the prophet David was guilty of murder and adultery, and many other of the most deadly sins, yet he was said to be a man after God's own heart, because he abounded more with thankfulness than any other that is mentioned in holy Scripture, as may appear in his book of Psalms; where there is such a commixture of his confessing of his sins and unworthiness, and such thankfulness for God's pardon and mercies, as did make him to be accounted, even by God himself, to be a man after his own heart. And let us, in that, labor to be as like him as we can: let not the blessings we receive daily from God make us not to value or not praise him because they be common; let us not forget to praise him for the innocent mirth and pleasure we have met with since we met together. What would a blind man give to see the pleasant rivers, and meadows, and flowers, and fountains, that we have met with since we met together? I have been told that if a man that was born blind could obtain to have his sight for but only one hour during his whole life, and should at the first opening of his eyes, fix his sight upon the sun when it was in its full glory, either at the rising or setting of it, he would be so transported and amazed, and so admire the glory of it, that he would not willingly turn his eyes from that first ravishing object, to behold all the other various beauties this world could present to him. And this, and many other like blessings, we enjoy daily. And for most of them, because they be so common, most men forget to pay their praises; but let not us, because it is a sacrifice so pleasing to Him that made that sun and us, and still protects us, and gives us flowers and showers, and stomachs and meat, and content, and leisure to go a-fishing

Well, scholar, I have almost tired myself, and I fear more than almost tired you: but I now see Tottenham High Cross, and our short walk thither shall put a period to my too long discourse, in which my meaning was and is, to plant that in your mind, with which I labor to possess my own soul; that is, a meek and thankful heart. And to that end, I have showed you that riches, without them, do not make any man happy. But let me tell you that riches with them remove many fears and cares: and therefore my advice is that you endeavor to be honestly rich or contentedly poor; but be sure that your riches be justly got, or you spoil all. For it is well said by Caussin, "He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping." Therefore be sure you look to that. And in the next place, look to your health: and if you have it, praise God, and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of,—a blessing that money cannot buy,—and therefore value it, and be thankful for it. As for money, which may be said to be the third blessing, neglect it not: but note that there is no necessity of being rich; for I told you there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side them: and if you have a competence, enjoy it with a meek, cheerful, thankful heart. I will tell you, scholar, I have heard a grave divine say that God has two dwellings,—one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart. Which Almighty God grant to me and to my honest scholar. And so you are welcome to Tottenham High Cross.

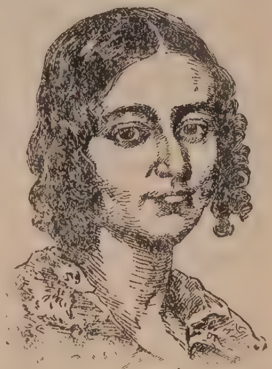
Venator—Well, master, I thank you for all your good directions; but for none more than this last, of thankfulness, which I hope I shall never forget. And pray let's now rest ourselves in this sweet shady arbor, which Nature herself has woven with her own fine finger; 'tis such a contexture of woodbines, sweetbriar, jessamine, and myrtle, and so interwoven, as will secure us both from the sun's violent heat and from the approaching shower. And being sat down, I will requite a part of your courtesies with a bottle of sack, milk, oranges, and sugar, which, all put together, make a drink like nectar; indeed, too good for any but us anglers. And so, master, here is a full glass to you of that liquor: and when you have pledged me, I will repeat the verses which I promised you; it is a copy printed among some of Sir Henry Wotton's, and doubtless made either by him or by a lover of angling. Come, master, now drink a glass to me, and then I will pledge you, and fall to my repetition: it is a description of such country recreations as I have enjoyed since I had the happiness to fall into your company.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD

(1844–)

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward was born in Andover, Massachusetts, August 31st, 1844; the daughter of Professor Austin Phelps of the Andover Theological Seminary, and his wife Elizabeth Stuart, the author of ‘Sunnyside,’—one of the pioneer stories of New England life after the naturalistic manner.

Miss Phelps's education, a classical and scholarly one, was under the supervision of her father, supplemented by studies in theology and miscellaneous reading. The influence of the Civil War tended to excite and develop the literary faculty. She began to write at an early age; and before she was twenty was the author of the much-discussed ‘The Gates Ajar,’ a speculative treatise in the form of a story, depicting the problematic experiences of the soul after death. Besides the fact that the subject was interesting, and the book intimate and in a peculiar manner an appeal to the imagination, the time was well chosen for its production; and an undoubted piquancy was added that such a revolt from cast-iron tradition should have emanated from the stronghold of orthodoxy. But the subject, though interesting, was not novel. The success of ‘The Gates Ajar’ was therefore due to the author's striking characteristics, and the novelty and originality of her way of expressing her ideas.



Mrs. E. S. P. Ward

‘The Gates Ajar,’ and its successors ‘Beyond the Gates’ and ‘The Gates Between,’ cleverly described as “the annexation of heaven,” portray the celestial world as a sublimated earth; human nature and its peculiarities occupying a prominent foreground, and Divine personages appearing only in the distance. In this Utopia, innocent likings of individuals become laws: the sportsman is made happy by the presence of his horses and dogs, and the good little girls nurse their dolls. If, however, a profound theme is treated as a scheme of color, and the composition is not disturbed in the treatment, the gravity of the subject does not exclude it from works of art. These books are consistent, and take a certain possession of the reader, bereaved or speculative. The humor is largely that of section and environment, with a fidelity to the admixture of sentiment and common-sense which is characteristic of New England; the style, a marked one, displays not so much subtlety of expression as the use of unusual terms laden with esoteric meaning.

The success of 'The Gates Ajar' was phenomenal: the sale in England alone reached one hundred thousand copies, and translations appeared in five Continental languages; at one step Miss Phelps had arrived at fame. Other works followed in rapid succession,—two volumes of poems, several of short stories, one of essays, and ten novels.

The tone of thought and the way of writing are so peculiarly Miss Phelps's own that no one who has read one of her books has the right to feel impatient with another. Her characteristics are marked in the slightest sketch: a high susceptibility to tragic situation, an impassioned human sympathy, and a noble familiarity with the sorrows of the lowly.

In consequence, she is so much the novelist of emotion that she may be said to write with her soul instead of her pen. In her short stories (as 'The Madonna of the Tubs' and 'The Supply at St. Agatha') she touches the high-water mark of religious melodrama. A single thought seizes and possesses her till she has dramatized it and proclaimed it. Her mind, as ready to take impressions as the sensitive plate of a camera, has been quickened by a life of ministry. And as there is more of misery than joy in the world which she best knows, and as she is too sincere an artist to paint other than what she knows, she presents a series of shipwrecks, figurative and literal, for which only her ability compels our patience.

Now and then she has written a novel of purely human passion, like 'The Story of Avis'; but with Miss Phelps, human passion is generally making desperate efforts to assert its rights in a conflict with altruism or fidelity, and life is too serious to waste time and paper on any subject less vital than temperance, the wrongs and rights of women, the common-law system and its iniquities, or the evils of modern dress. Her belief in «the cause,» whatever it may be, and in herself as its exponent, carries her audience with the force of conviction, and makes it patient with her prolonged analyses of psychological conditions.

When the tension becomes so strained that disaster is threatened, the author takes a swift leap downward into the every-day world, and all concerned draw a long breath. The palpitating heroine generally has a safety-valve in a practical Down-Easter like Mrs. Butterwell in 'Doctor Zay'; whose sayings, slightly profane, are not lacking in humor or common-sense.

No better example of her power in possessing her reader is to be found than in the novel ‹A Singular Life,› — a direct appeal to the spiritual nature, whose end is the significance of the Christian life as portrayed in the New Testament. In this story she has recited her creed with the abandon of a nature that is like nothing so much as an alabaster vase in which a light is burning. There is no blind man's holiday, in which the sympathetic reader may steal a few moments of careless and irresponsible amusement. The encompassed hero fights his hard fight among the drunkards and murderers of the New England seaport town, with the booming ocean for a background; but we do not cease to suffer with him till he is hidden from our sight «wrapped in his purple pall.»

If her genius is emotional, it is also essentially feminine. When she strikes she strikes hard, if not directly, with italics. With feminine adroitness she makes a slave of nature, whose ardent votary she is; and knowing to a throb when the blooming of the lilies or the light on the sea will wave or blaze as background for partings or meetings, she does not disdain to use them. «The hall was dark, but the light of the lily was upon her;» «When she lifted her face, rose curlews hung over her, palpitating with joy.» She makes the outer world, with its patient inner meaning, the orchestral accompaniment to her favorite airs.

In 1889 Miss Phelps was married to Mr. Herbert D. Ward. Together they have written two novels: ‹Come Forth,› and ‹The Master of the Magicians.›

The quality of Mrs. Ward's genius is as unusual as her theories of life are out of the common. But to adapt the saying of one master of contemporary fiction concerning another, «Sentimentality is the dominant note of her music, but her art has made her sentimentality interesting.»

IN THE GRAY GOTH

From ‹Men, Women, and Ghosts.› Copyright 1869, by Fields, Osgood & Co.

IF THE wick of the big oil lamp had been cut straight, I don't believe it would ever have happened. . . .

But as I was going to say, when I started to talk about 41,— to tell the truth, Johnny, I'm always a long while coming to it, I believe. I'm getting to be an old man,— a little of a coward, maybe; and sometimes, when I sit alone here nights and think it over, it's just like the toothache, Johnny. As I was saying, if she had cut that wick straight, I do believe it wouldn't have happened,—though it isn't that I mean to lay the blame on her *now*.

I'd been out at work all day about the place, slicking things up for to-morrow; there was a gap in the barnyard fence to mend,—I left that till the last thing, I remember; I remember everything, some way or other, that happened that day,—and there was a new roof to put on the pig-pen, and the grapevine needed an extra layer of straw, and the latch was loose on the south barn-door; then I had to go round and take a last look at the sheep, and toss down an extra forkful for the cows, and go into the stall to have a talk with Ben, and unbutton the coop-door to see if the hens looked warm,—just to tuck 'em up, as you might say. I always felt sort of homesick—though I wouldn't have owned up to it, not even to Nancy—saying good-by to the creeturs the night before I went in. There, now! it beats all, to think you don't know what I'm talking about, and you a lumberman's son! "Going in" is going up into the woods, you know, to cut and haul for the winter,—up, sometimes, a hundred miles deep,—in in the fall and out in the spring; whole gangs of us shut up there sometimes for six months, then down with the freshets on the logs, and all summer to work the farm,—a merry sort of life when you get used to it, Johnny: but it was a great while ago, and it seems to me as if it must have been very cold.—Isn't there a little draft coming in at the pantry door?

So when I'd said good-by to the creeturs,—I remember just as plain how Ben put his great neck on my shoulder and whinnied like a baby; that horse knew when the season came round and I was going in, just as well as I did,—I tinkered up the barnyard fence, and locked the doors, and went in to supper.

I gave my finger a knock with the hammer, which may have had something to do with it; for a man doesn't feel very good-natured when he's been green enough to do a thing like that, and he doesn't like to say it aches either. But if there is anything I can't bear, it is lamp smoke; it always did put me out, and I expect it always will. Nancy knew what a fuss I made about it, and she was always very careful not to hector me with it. I ought to have remembered that, but I didn't. She had lighted the company lamp on purpose, too, because it was my last night. I liked it better than the tallow candle.

So I came in, stamping off the snow, and they were all in there about the fire,—the twins, and Mary Ann, and the rest; baby was sick, and Nancy was walking back and forth with him, with little Nancy pulling at her gown. You were the baby then, I believe, Johnny; but there always was a baby, and I don't rightly remember. The room was so black with smoke that they all looked as if they were swimming round and round in it. I guess coming in from the cold, and the pain in my finger and all, it made me a bit sick. At any rate, I threw open the window and blew out the light, as mad as a hornet.

«Nancy,» said I, «this room would strangle a dog, and you might have known it, if you'd had two eyes to see what you were about. There now! I've tipped the lamp over, and you just get a cloth and wipe up the oil.»

«Dear me!» said she, lighting a candle, and she spoke up very soft too. «Please, Aaron, don't let the cold in on baby. I'm sorry it was smoking, but I never knew a thing about it: he's been fretting and taking on so the last hour, I didn't notice anyway.»

«That's just what you ought to have done,» says I, madder than ever. «You know how I hate the stuff, and you ought to have cared more about me than to choke me up with it this way the last night before going in.»

Nancy was a patient, gentle-spoken sort of woman, and would bear a good deal from a fellow; but she used to fire up sometimes, and that was more than she could stand. «You don't deserve to be cared about, for speaking like that!» says she, with her cheeks as red as peat-coals.

That was right before the children. Mary Ann's eyes were as big as saucers, and little Nancy was crying at the top of her lungs, with the baby tuning in, so we knew it was time to stop. But stopping wasn't ending; and folks can look things that they don't say.

We sat down to supper as glum as pump-handles: there were some fritters—I never knew anybody beat your mother at fritters—smoking hot off the stove, and some maple molasses in one of the best chiny tea-cups; I knew well enough it was just on purpose for my last night, but I never had a word to say; and Nancy crumbed up the children's bread with a jerk. Her cheeks didn't grow any whiter,—it seemed as if they would blaze right up; I couldn't help looking at them, for all I pretended not to, for she looked just like a picture.

That supper was a very dreary sort of supper, with the baby crying, and Nancy getting up between the mouthfuls to walk up and down the room with him; he was a heavy little chap for a ten-month-old, and I think she must have been tuckered out with him all day. I didn't think about it then: a man doesn't notice such things when he's angry,—it isn't in him; I can't say but *she* would if I'd been in her place. I just eat up the fritters and the maple molasses,—seems to me I told her she ought not to use the best chiny cup, but I'm not just sure,—and then I took my pipe and sat down in the corner.

I watched her putting the children to bed; they made her a great deal of bother, squirming off of her lap and running round barefoot. Sometimes I used to hold them and talk to them and help her a bit, when I felt good-natured; but I just sat and smoked, and let them alone. I was all worked up about that lamp-wick; and I thought, you see, if she hadn't had any feelings for me there was no need of my having any for her: if she had cut the wick, I'd have taken the babies; she hadn't cut the wick, and I wouldn't take the babies: she might see it if she wanted to, and think what she pleased. I had been badly treated, and I meant to show it.

It is strange, Johnny, it really does seem to me very strange, how easy it is in this world to be always taking care of our *rights*. I've thought a great deal about it since I've been growing old, and there seems to me a good many things we'd better look after fust.

But you see I hadn't found that out in '41; and so I sat in the corner, and felt very much abused. I can't say but what Nancy had pretty much the same idea; for when the young ones were all in bed at last, she took her knitting and sat down the other side of the fire, sort of turning her head round and looking up at the ceiling, as if she were trying her best to forget I was there. That was a way she had when I was courting, and we went along to huskings together, with the moon shining round.

Well. I kept on smoking, and she kept on looking at the ceiling, and nobody said a word for a while; till by-and-by the fire burnt down, and she got up and put on a fresh log.

« You're dreadful wasteful with the wood, Nancy, » says I,— bound to say something cross, and that was all I could think of.

« Take care of your own fire, then, » says she, throwing the log down and standing up as straight as she could stand. « I think it's a pity if you haven't anything better to do, the last night before going in, than to pick everything I do to pieces this way,—and I tired enough to drop, carrying that great crying child in my arms all day. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Aaron Hollis! »

Now if she had cried a little, very like I should have given up, and that would have been the end of it: for I never could bear to see a woman cry,—it goes against the grain. But your mother wasn't one of the crying sort, and she didn't feel like it that night.

She just stood up there by the fireplace as proud as Queen Victory;—I don't blame her, Johnny,—oh, no, I don't blame her: she had the right of it there, I *ought* to have been ashamed of myself; but a man never likes to hear that from other folks, and I put my pipe down on the chimney-shelf so hard I heard it snap like ice, and I stood up too, and said—but no matter what I said, I guess. A man's quarrels with his wife always make me think of what the Scripture says about other folks not intermeddling. They're things, in my opinion, that don't concern anybody else as a general thing; and I couldn't tell what I said without telling what she said, and I'd rather not do that. Your mother was as good and patient-tempered a woman as ever lived, Johnny, and she didn't mean it, and it was I that set her on. Besides, my words were worst of the two.

Well, well, I'll hurry along just here, for it's not a time I like to think about; but we had it back and forth there for half an hour, till we had angered each other up so I couldn't stand it; and I lifted up my hand,—I would have struck her if she hadn't been a woman.

« Well, » says I, « Nancy Hollis, I'm sorry for the day I married you, and that's the truth, if ever I spoke a true word in my life! »

Well, I've seen your mother look 'most all sorts of ways in the course of her life; but I never saw her before, and I never saw her since, look as she looked that minute. All the blaze went out in her cheeks, as if somebody had thrown cold water on it, and she stood there stock still, so white I thought she would drop.

"Aaron —" she began, and stopped to catch her breath,— "Aaron —" but she couldn't get any further; she just caught hold of a little shawl she had on with both her hands, as if she thought she could hold herself up by it, and walked right out of the room. I knew she had gone to bed, for I heard her go up and shut the door. I stood there a few minutes with my hands in my pockets, whistling 'Yankee Doodle.' Your mother used to say men were queer folks, Johnny: they always whistled up the gayest when they felt the wust. Then I went to the closet and got another pipe, and I didn't go up-stairs till it was smoked out.

When I was a young man, Johnny, I used to be that sort of fellow that couldn't bear to give up beat. I'd acted like a brute, and I knew it; but I was too spunky to say so. So I says to myself, "If she won't make up first, I won't, and that's the end on't." Very likely she said the same thing, for your mother was a spirited sort of woman when her temper *was* up; so there we were, more like enemies sworn against each other than man and wife who had loved each other true for fifteen years,—a whole winter, and danger, and death perhaps, coming between us, too.

I tell you, Johnny, young folks they start in life with very pretty ideas,—very pretty. But take it as a general thing, they don't know any more what they're talking about than they do about each other; and they don't know any more about each other than they do about the man in the moon. They begin very nice, with their new carpets and teaspoons, and a little mending to do, and coming home early evenings to talk; but by-and-by the shine wears off. Then come the babies, and worry and wear and temper. About that time they begin to be a little acquainted, and to find out that there are two wills and two sets of habits to be fitted somehow. It takes them anywhere along from one year to three to get jostled down together. As for smoothing off, there's more or less of that to be done always.

Well, I didn't sleep very well that night, dropping into naps and waking up. The baby was worrying over his teeth every half-hour, and Nancy getting up to walk him off to sleep in her arms;—it was the only way you *would* be hushed up, and you'd lie and yell till somebody did it.

Now, it wasn't many times since we'd been married that I had let her do that thing all night long. I used to have a way of getting up to take my turn, and sending her off to sleep. It isn't a man's business, some folks say. I don't know anything about that;— maybe if I'd been broiling my brain in book-learning all day till come night, and I was hard put to it to get my sleep anyhow, like the parson there, it wouldn't: but all I know is, what if I had been breaking my back in the potato patch since morning? so she'd broken hers over the oven; and what if I did need nine hours' sound sleep? I could chop and saw without it next day just as well as she could do the ironing, to say nothing of my being a great stout fellow,— there wasn't a chap for ten miles round with my muscle,— and she with those blue veins on her forehead. Howsomever that may be, I wasn't use to letting her do it by herself: and so I lay with my eyes shut, and pretended that I was asleep; for I didn't feel like giving in and speaking up gentle, not about that nor anything else.

I could see her though, between my eyelashes; and I lay there, every time I woke up, and watched her walking back and forth, back and forth, up and down, with the heavy little fellow in her arms, all night long.

I was off very early in the morning; I don't think it could have been much after three o'clock when I woke up. Nancy had my breakfast all laid out over night, except the coffee; and we had fixed it that I was to make up the fire, and get off without waking her, if the baby was very bad. At least, that was the way I wanted it; but she stuck to it she should be up,— that was before there'd been any words between us.

The room was very gray and very still,— I remember just how it looked, with Nancy's clothes on a chair, and the baby's shoes lying round. She had got him off to sleep in his cradle, and had dropped into a nap, poor thing! with her face as white as the sheet, from watching.

I stopped when I was dressed, half-way out of the room, and looked round at it — it was so white, Johnny! It would be a long time before I should see it again,— five months were a long time; then there was the risk coming down in the freshets — and the words I'd said last night. I thought, you see, if I should kiss it once,— I needn't wake her up,— maybe I should go off feeling better. So I stood there looking: she was lying so still, I couldn't see any more stir to her than if she had her breath held in. I wish I had done it, Johnny,—I can't get over wishing I'd done it, yet. But I was just too proud; and I turned round and went out, and shut the door.

We were going to meet down at the post-office, the whole gang of us, and I had quite a spell to walk. I was going in on Bob Stokes's team. I remember how fast I walked, with my hands in my pockets, looking along up at the stars,—the sun was putting them out pretty fast,—and trying not to think of Nancy. But I didn't think of anything else.

It was so early that there wasn't many folks about to see us off; but Bob Stokes's wife,—she lived nigh the office, just across the road,—she was there to say good-by, kissing of him, and crying on his shoulder. I don't know what difference that should make with Bob Stokes, but I snapped him up well when he came along and said good-morning.

There were twenty-one of us just, on that gang, in on contract for Dove and Beadle. Dove and Beadle did about the heaviest thing on woodland of anybody, about that time. Good, steady men we were, most of us. Yes, though I say it that shouldn't say it, we were as fine a looking gang as any in the county, starting off that morning in our red uniform;—Nancy took a sight of pains with my shirt, sewing it up stout, for fear it should bother me ripping, and I with nobody to take a stitch for me all winter. The boys went off in good spirits, singing till they were out of sight of town, and waving their caps at their wives and babies standing in the window along on the way. I didn't sing. I thought the wind blew too hard—seems to me that was the reason: I'm sure there must have been a reason, for I had a voice of my own in those days, and had led the choir perpetual for five years.

We weren't going in very deep: Dove and Beadle's lots lay about thirty miles from the nearest house; and a straggling, lonely sort of place that was too, five miles out of the village, with nobody but a dog and a deaf old woman in it. Sometimes, as I was telling you, we had been in a hundred miles from any human creature but ourselves.

It took us two days to get there, though, with the oxen; and the teams were loaded down well, with so many axes and the pork-barrels;—I don't know anything like pork for hefting down more than you expect it to, reasonable. It was one of your ugly gray days, growing dark at four o'clock, with snow in the air, when we hauled up in the lonely place. The trees were blazed pretty thick, I remember, especially the pines; Dove and Beadle always had that done up prompt in October. It's pretty work going in blazing while the sun is warm, and the woods like a great bonfire with the maples. I used to like it; but your mother wouldn't hear of it when she could help herself,—it kept me away so long.

There were three shanties,—they don't often have more than two or three in one place: they were empty, and the snow had drifted in; Bob Stokes's oxen were fagged out with their heads hanging down, and the horses were whinnying for their supper. Holt had one of his great brush-fires going,—there was nobody like Holt for making fires,—and the boys were hurrying round in their red shirts, shouting at the oxen, and singing a little, some of them low, under their breath, to keep their spirits up. There was snow as far as you could see,—down the cart-path, and all around, and away into the woods; and there was snow in the sky now, setting in for a regular nor'easter. The trees stood up straight all around without any leaves, and under the bushes it was as black as pitch.

«Five months,» said I to myself; «five months!»

«What in time's the matter with you, Hollis?» says Bob Stokes, with a great slap on my arm: «you're giving that 'ere ox molasses on his hay!»

Sure enough I was; and he said I acted like a dazed creatur, and very likely I did. But I couldn't have told Bob the reason. You see, I knew Nancy was just drawing up her little rocking-chair—the one with the red cushion—close by the fire, sitting there with the children to wait for the tea to boil. And I knew—I couldn't help knowing, if I'd tried hard for it—how she was crying away softly in the dark, so that none of them could see her, to think of the words we'd said, and I gone in without ever making of them up. I was sorry for them then. O Johnny, I was sorry, and she was thirty miles away. I'd got to be sorry five months, thirty miles away, and couldn't let her know.

The boys said I was poor company that first week, and I shouldn't wonder if I was. I couldn't seem to get over it any way, to think I couldn't let her know.

If I could have sent her a scrap of a letter, or a message, or something, I should have felt better. But there wasn't any chance of that this long time, unless we got out of pork or fodder, and had to send down,—which we didn't expect to, for we'd laid in more than usual.

We had two pretty rough weeks' work to begin with; for the worst storms of the season set in, and kept in, and I never saw their like before or since. It seemed as if there'd never be an end to them. Storm after storm, blow after blow, freeze after freeze; half a day's sunshine, and then at it again! We were well tired of it before they stopped; it made the boys homesick.

However, we kept at work pretty brisk,—lumbermen aren't the fellows to be put out for a snow-storm,—cutting and hauling and sawing, out in the sleet and wind. Bob Stokes froze his left foot that second week, and I was frost-bitten pretty badly myself. Cullen—he was the boss—he was well out of sorts, I tell you, before the sun came out, and cross enough to bite a tenpenny nail in two.

But when the sun *is* out, it isn't so bad a kind of life after all. At work all day, with a good hot dinner in the middle; then back to the shanties at dark, to as rousing a fire and tiptop swagan as anybody could ask for. Holt was cook that season, and Holt couldn't be beaten on his swagan.

Now you don't mean to say you don't know what swagan is? Well, well! To think of it! All I have to say is, you don't know what's good then. Beans and pork and bread and molasses,—that's swagan,—all stirred up in a great kettle, and boiled together; and I don't know anything—not even your mother's fritters—I'd give more for a taste of now. We just about lived on that: there's nothing you can cut and haul all day on like swagan. Besides that, we used to have doughnuts,—you don't know what doughnuts are, here in Massachusetts; as big as a dinner-plate those doughnuts were, and—well, a little hard, perhaps. They used to have it about in Bangor that we used them for clock pendulums, but I don't know about that.

I used to think a great deal about Nancy nights, when we were sitting by the fire;—we had our fire right in the middle of the hut, you know, with a hole in the roof to let the smoke out. When supper was eaten, the boys all sat up around it, and told stories, and sang, and cracked their jokes; then they had their backgammon and cards; we got sleepy early, along about nine or ten o'clock, and turned in under the roof with our blankets. The roof sloped down, you know, to the ground; so we lay with our heads in under the little eaves, and our feet to the fire,—ten or twelve of us to a shanty, all round in a row. They built the huts up like a baby's cob-house, with the logs fitted in together. I used to think a great deal about your mother, as I was saying; sometimes I would lie awake when the rest were off as sound as a top, and think about her.

So it went along till come the last of January, when one day I saw the boys all standing round in a heap, and talking.

« What's the matter ? » says I.

« Pork's given out," says Bob with a whistle. « Beadle got that last lot from Jenkins there, his son-in-law, and it's sp'ilt. I could have told him that beforehand. Never knew Jenkins to do the fair thing by anybody yet.»

« Who's going down ? » said I, stopping short. I felt the blood run all over my face, like a woman's.

« Cullen hasn't made up his mind yet," says Bob, walking off.

Now you see there wasn't a man on the ground who wouldn't jump at the chance to go; it broke up the winter for them, and sometimes they could run in home for half an hour, driving by: so there wasn't much of a hope for me. But I went straight to Mr. Cullen.

« Too late. Just promised Jim Jacobs," said he, speaking up quick: it was just business to him, you know. . . .

Next morning somebody woke me up with a push, and there was the boss.

« Why, Mr. Cullen! » says I, with a jump.

« Hurry up, man, and eat your breakfast," said he: « Jacobs is down sick with his cold.»

«*Oh!*» said I.

« You and the pork must be back here day after to-morrow, so be spry," said he.

It was just eight o'clock when I started; it took some time to get breakfast, and feed the nags, and get orders. I stood there, slapping the snow with my whip, crazy to be off, hearing the last of what Mr. Cullen had to say.

They gave me the two horses,— we hadn't but two: oxen are tougher for going in, as a general thing,— and the lightest team on the ground: it was considerably lighter than Bob Stokes's. If it hadn't been for the snow, I might have put the thing through in two days; but the snow was up to the creaturs' knees in the shady places all along; off from the road, in among the gullies, you could stick a four-foot measure down anywhere. So they didn't look for me back before Wednesday night.

"I must have that pork Wednesday night sure," says Cullen.

"Well, sir," says I, "you shall have it Wednesday noon, Providence permitting; and you shall have it Wednesday night anyway."

"You will have a storm to do it in, I'm afraid," said he, looking at the clouds, just as I was whipping up. "You're all right on the road, I suppose?"

"All right," said I; — and I'm sure I ought to have been, for the times I'd been over it.

Bess and Beauty — they were the horses; and of all the ugly nags that ever I saw, Beauty was the ugliest — started off on a round trot, slewing along down the hill; they knew they were going home just as well as I did. I looked back, as we turned the corner, to see the boys standing round in their red shirts, with the snow behind them, and the fire and the shanties. I felt a mite lonely when I couldn't see them any more: the snow was so dead still, and there were thirty miles of it to cross before I could see human face again.

The clouds had an ugly look, — a few flakes had fallen already, — and the snow was purple, deep in as far as you could see under the trees.

There is no place like the woods for bringing a storm down on you quick: the trees are so thick you don't mind the first few flakes, till first you know there's a whirl of 'em, and the wind is up.

I was minding less about it than usual, for I was thinking of Nannie, — that's what I used to call her, Johnny, when she was a girl; but it seems a long time ago, that does. I was thinking how surprised she'd be, and pleased. I knew she would be pleased. I didn't think so poorly of her as to suppose she wasn't just as sorry now as I was for what had happened. I knew well enough how she would jump and throw down her sewing with a little scream, and run and put her arms about my neck and cry, and couldn't help herself.

So I didn't mind about the snow, for planning it all out, till all at once I looked up, and something slashed into my eyes and stung me: it was sleet.

"Oho!" said I to myself, with a whistle;—it was a very long whistle, Johnny: I knew well enough then it was no play-work I had before me till the sun went down, nor till morning either.

That was about noon: it couldn't have been half an hour since I'd eaten my dinner; I eat it driving, for I couldn't bear to waste time.

The road wasn't broken there an inch, and the trees were thin: there'd been a clearing there years ago, and wide, white, level places wound off among the trees; one looked as much like a road as another, for the matter of that. I pulled my visor down over my eyes to keep the sleet out;—after they're stung too much they're good for nothing to see with, and I *must* see, if I meant to keep that road.

It began to be cold. The wind blew from the ocean, straight as an arrow. The sleet blew every way,—into your eyes, down your neck, in like a knife into your cheeks. I could feel the snow crunching in under the runners, crisp, turned to ice in a minute. I reached out to give Bess a cut on the neck, and the sleeve of my coat was stiff as pasteboard before I bent my elbow up again.

If you looked up at the sky, your eyes were shut with a snap as if somebody'd shot them. If you looked in under the trees, you could see the icicles a minute, and the purple shadows. If you looked straight ahead, you couldn't see a thing.

By-and-by I thought I had dropped the reins. I looked at my hands, and there I was holding them tight. I knew then that it was time to get out and walk.

I didn't try much after that to look ahead: it was of no use, for the sleet was fine, like needles, twenty of 'em in your eye at a wink; then it was growing dark. Bess and Beauty knew the road as well as I did, so I had to trust to them. I thought I must be coming near the clearing where I'd counted on putting up overnight, in case I couldn't reach the deaf old woman's.

Pretty soon Bess stopped short. Beauty was pulling on,—Beauty always did pull on,—but she stopped too. I couldn't stop so easily; so I walked along like a machine, up on a line with the creaturs' ears. I *did* stop then, or you never would have heard this story, Johnny.

Two paces—and then two hundred feet shot down like a plummet. A great cloud of snow-flakes puffed up over the edge.

There were rocks at my right hand, and rocks at my left. There was the sky overhead. I was in the Gray Goth!

There was no going any farther that night, that was clear: so I put about into the hut, and got my fire going; and Bess and Beauty and I, we slept together.

It was an outlandish name to give it, seems to me, anyway. I don't know what a Goth is, Johnny; maybe you do. There was a great figure up on the rock, about eight feet high: some folks thought it looked like a man. I never thought so before, but that night it did kind of stare in through the door as natural as life.

When I woke up in the morning I thought I was on fire. I stirred and turned over, and I was ice. My tongue was swollen up so I couldn't swallow without strangling. I crawled up to my feet, and every bone in me was stiff as a shingle.

Bess was looking hard at me, whinnying for her breakfast. «Bess,» says I, very slow, «we must get home — to-night — *any* — how.»

I pushed open the door. It creaked out into a great drift, and slammed back. I squeezed through and limped out. The shanty stood up a little, in the highest part of the Goth. I went down a little, — I went as far as I could go. There was a pole lying there, blown down in the night; it came about up to my head. I sunk it into the snow, and drew it up.

Just six feet.

I went back to Bess and Beauty, and I shut the door. I told them I couldn't help it, — something ailed my arms, — I couldn't shovel them out to-day. I must lie down and wait till to-morrow.

I waited till to-morrow. It snowed all day, and it snowed all night. It was snowing when I pushed the door out again into the drift. I went back and lay down. I didn't seem to care.

The third day the sun came out, and I thought about Nannie. I was going to surprise her. She would jump up and run and put her arms about my neck. I took the shovel, and crawled out on my hands and knees. I dug it down, and fell over on it like a baby.

After that I understood. I'd never had a fever in my life, and it's not strange that I shouldn't have known before.

It came all over me in a minute, I think. I couldn't shovel through. Nobody could hear. I might call, and I might shout.

By-and-by the fire would go out. Nancy would not come. Nancy did not know. Nancy and I should never kiss and make up now.

I struck my arm out into the air, and shouted out her name, and yelled it out. Then I crawled out once more into the drift.

I tell you, Johnny, I was a stout-hearted man, who'd never known a fear. I could freeze. I could burn up there alone in the horrid place with fever. I could starve. It wasn't death nor awfulness I couldn't face,—not that, not *that;* but I loved her true, I say,—I loved her true, and I'd spoken my last words to her, my very last; I had left her *those* to remember, day in and day out, and year upon year, as long as she remembered her husband, as long as she remembered anything.

I think I must have gone pretty nearly mad with the fever and the thinking. I fell down there like a log, and lay groaning "God Almighty! God Almighty!" over and over, not knowing what it was that I was saying, till the words strangled in my throat.

Next day, I was too weak so much as to push open the door. I crawled around the hut on my knees, with my hands up over my head, shouting out as I did before, and fell, a helpless heap, into the corner; after that I never stirred.

How many days had gone, or how many nights, I had no more notion than the dead. I knew afterwards; when I knew how they waited and expected and talked and grew anxious, and sent down home to see if I was there, and how she— But no matter, no matter about that.

I used to scoop up a little snow when I woke up from the stupors. The bread was the other side of the fire; I couldn't reach round. Beauty eat it up one day; I saw her. Then the wood was used up. I clawed out chips with my nails from the old rotten logs the shanty was made of, and kept up a little blaze. By-and-by I couldn't pull any more. Then there were only some coals,—then a little spark. I blew at that spark a long while,—I hadn't much breath. One night it went out, and the wind blew in. One day I opened my eyes, and Bess had fallen down in the corner, dead and stiff. Beauty had pushed out of the door somehow and gone.

Sometimes I thought Nancy was there in the plaid shawl, walking round the ashes where the spark went out. Then again I thought Mary Ann was there, and Isaac, and the baby. But they never were. I used to wonder if I wasn't dead, and hadn't made a mistake about the place that I was going to.

One day there was a noise. I had heard a great many noises, so I didn't take much notice. It came up crunching on the snow, and I didn't know but it was Gabriel or somebody with his chariot. Then I thought more likely it was a wolf.

Pretty soon I looked up, and the door was open; some men were coming in, and a woman. She was ahead of them all, she was; she came in with a great spring, and had my head against her neck, and her arm holding me up, and her cheek down to mine, with her dear, sweet, warm breath all over me: and that was all I knew.

Well, there was brandy, and there was a fire, and there were blankets, and there was hot water, and I don't know what; but warmer than all the rest I felt her breath against my cheek, and her arms about my neck, and her long hair, which she had wrapped all in, about my hands.

So by-and-by my voice came. «Nannie!» said I.

«Oh, don't!» said she, and first I knew she was crying.

«But I will,» says I, «for I'm sorry.»

«Well, so am I,» says she.

Said I, «I thought I was dead, and hadn't made up, Nannie.»

«O *dear!*» said she; and down fell a great hot splash right on my face.

Says I, «It was all me, for I ought to have gone back and kissed you.»

«No, it was *me*,» said she, «for I wasn't asleep, not any such thing. I peeked out this way, through my lashes, to see if you wouldn't come back. I meant to wake up then. Dear me!» says she, «to think what a couple of fools we were, now!»

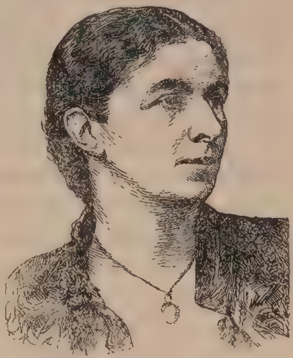
«Nannie,» says I, «you can let the lamp smoke all you want to!»

«Aaron —» she began, just as she had begun that other night, — «Aaron —» but she didn't finish, and — Well, well, no matter: I guess you don't want to hear any more, do you?

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

(1851–)

The history of the growth of English fiction, from Richardson and Fielding to the present day, is the history of the increasing attention given to character. The modern novel studies personality, and depends for its interest mostly upon the inter-relations of men and women in the social complex, subjectively viewed. The main stream of story-telling has set stronger and stronger in this direction for a hundred and fifty years; although cross-currents, even counter-currents at times, have seemed to deflect it from its due course. The adventure tale, caring more for incident and action and for the objective handling of character than for the subjective analysis of motive, has had since 'Robinson Crusoe' a vigorous if sporadic life. Romantic fiction has had always its makers and its wide public. Some of the unpalatable developments of the analytic school, too, have been such that the parent is hardly to be recognized in the children. One such offspring is the so-called realistic fiction, which errs in laying over-emphasis upon relatively unimportant detail, and in forgetting that life is no more all-sour than it is all-sweet. And what is known as naturalism shows how much the analytic method may be abused in the hands of those who strive to divorce art from ethics, and have a penchant for the physical.



Mrs. H. Ward

But the higher and nobler conception of fictional art, recognizing the heart and soul of man as the most tremendous possible stage for the playing out of social dramas, has been held and illustrated by a line of gifted modern writers, among whom Thackeray, Dickens, George Meredith, Hardy, and George Eliot are major stars. In this literary genealogy Mrs. Humphry Ward belongs by taste, sympathy, and birthright of power. She is one of the few contemporaneous novel-writers whose work is in a sound tradition, and has enough of lofty purpose and artistic conscientiousness to call for careful consideration. Had Mrs. Ward failed, she would deserve respect for her high aim, in a day when tyros turn off pseudo-fiction as easily as they do business letters.

Mrs. Ward's first story, 'Miss Bretherton,' which appeared in 1884, made no great stir; but it was a charming and thoroughly well-done piece of fiction, revealing marked ability in character study, and a comprehension of English society. The theme chosen, the slowly generating love between a brilliant young actress and a middle-aged man of letters, is developed with delicate idealism, with sympathy and imagination. The writer of the later and greater novels is foreshadowed if not fully confessed in the tale; which in its pleasant ending, and its absence of definite special pleading, declares itself a younger book. To some, the fact that 'Miss Bretherton' is a straightaway love story will make it all the better. But to one who understands Mrs. Ward's intellectual and artistic growth, the book will be seen to be tentative.

By the publication of 'Robert Elsmere' four years later, in 1888, its writer defined her position and gave a clear idea of her quality. The book made a deep impression. The fact that it dealt with the religious problem, tracing in the person of the hero the intellectual change undergone by a mind open to modern scholarship and thought, gave it for many the glamour of the dangerous, and no doubt helped its vogue. It was a story which people took sides for or against, and fought over. But 'Robert Elsmere' would never have achieved more than a critical success if it had been nothing but an able polemic against orthodox views. It was far more: a vital story full of human nature, intensely felt, strong in its characterization, and in some of its scenes finely dramatic,—this last implied in the fact that the novel was dramatized. Elsmere is not a lay figure to carry a thesis, but an honest human brother, yearning for the truth. His wife is an admirable picture of the sweet, strong, restricted conservatism of a certain type of nature. And Rose and Langham—to mention only two more personages of the drama—are real and attractive creations. The nobility of intention in this, the first of Mrs. Ward's full-length social studies depicting the tragedy of the inner life, must be felt by every receptive reader. The charge of didacticism commonly preferred against this novel has some justification, though the artistic impulse was present in large measure,—indeed prevailed in the work. And in the next book, 'The History of David Grieve,' given to the public after another four years had intervened (1892), the human elements are broader, the life limned more varied, and hence the impression that the author has a nut to crack is not so strong. Yet David's experience, like Robert's. with all its difference of birth, position, training, and influences, is one of the soul: the evolution of personal faith may be said to be the main motive of the tale. The art of it is finer, the interpretation of humanity richer. The story is a sombre one,—Mrs. Ward's work as a whole, and progressively, may be so described,—but it is far from pessimistic. The teaching is that men and women may conquer through soul stress; that the world is an arena for the most momentous of all things,—character training. Parts of ‹David Grieve› have a convincing fervor and sweep, and an imaginativeness of conception, which denote the writer's highest accomplishment. The opening sketches of English country life, as David and his sister grow up together, and the storm-and-stress phase of his development, are superbly conceived and carried through. In the Parisian episode particularly, the Bohemianism of the situation, which in some hands would have been excuse for sensational vulgarity, is touched with a romantic idealism, lifting it to a far higher plane, and making the scenes typical, elemental. Mrs. Ward never drew a more distinct, impressive figure than that of David's fierce, strange, deep-hearted sister Louie. But aside from particulars, and judging the novel as a whole, the later works are perhaps superior.

Since ‹David Grieve,› Mrs. Ward's stories have represented political, social, and economic, instead of religious interests. The love motive is always given due place, and the display of character in a certain *milieu* is steadily the intention. ‹Marcella›—a volume which dates from 1894—is a truthful and noble study of woman nature: the novelist's sex should be grateful to her for portraying in this and the companion story, ‹Sir George Tressady,› the organic development of so rich and representative an English gentlewoman as Marcella. She is taken in the vealy stage, when her ideals involve much foolishness, young selfishness, and false romanticism. She irritates and even antagonizes at first. But under the fructifying and clarifying influences of love and life, she works out into a splendid creature, and one feels that the evolution is absolutely consistent. Marcella was always Marcella potentially, after all. Very seldom has the nobleman in politics and as land-owner been done with so much clearness and justness as in Aldous Raeburn, Marcella's lover. The parliamentary and socialistic scenes are drawn with knowledge and power, by a writer sensitive to the most significant drift of thought of our day. Modern London in its most important streams of influence is photographed with rare fidelity in this very strong broad story, and the photographic reality is softened by artistic selection and the imaginative instinct. The quivering humanitarianism with which Mrs. Ward portrays the struggles and hardships of the English poor is another admirable trait.

In the year between ‹Marcella› and ‹Tressady,› came the most relentlessly realistic of all this author's works,—the novelette called ‹The Story of Bessie Costrell.› One can but think that Mrs. Ward's mood in making it was one of temporary exasperation and gloom; for the tale—a sordid bit of peasant life, whose ugly dénouement does not seem inevitable—leaves the reader depressed and dubious, with *cui bono?* on his lips,—which cannot be said of any of the longer stories. As a work of art, it is one of the closest knit and best constructed things she has written: and the impression it makes is as powerful as it is unpleasant.

In 'Sir George Tressady' (1896), Mrs. Ward returned to her true *métier*, and furnished another proof of her mature grasp on art and life. The book compels interest in several ways. It reveals Marcella as Lady Maxwell; a superb woman of the social world, a regal leader of men, who wields an influence all the more potent in that it is social and indirect, not professional or of the polls: reveals her as she walks unscathed through an intimacy with Tressady, perilous for any woman save one of exceptional dignity and purity. Then the relation of Tressady to his pretty, shallow little wife is a subtle study of mismated temperaments, whose unhappiness is logical and self-sought, since the two rushed into marriage with no serious appreciation of what it is and should be. Another facet of life reflected in the story is a phase of the labor-capital conflict. Tressady's position as a mine-owner brings up one of the burning modern questions, and his tragic death in the mine explosion seems the only solution of the trouble. Socio-political activities, whose phenomena have been well assimilated by this writer, form the warp and woof of a novel which one trusts in its scenes and characters. One is assured that it is real, for under its absolute contemporaneity are working the elemental springs of human action. Mrs. Ward has done nothing more complete and satisfying to the æsthetic and moral senses than this fiction.

The scope and ability of such work set it apart from the run of stories which cheapen the very name fiction, and justify the use for it of the half-contemptuous epithet "light literature." Mrs. Ward is serious-minded certainly, and regards her art as important. This, even if it involves a deficient sense of humor, as some of her critics claim, is welcome in a day when amusement is often bought too dear!

Mrs. Ward's birth, education, and social environment fit her to do this large, serious work. Born Mary Arnold, she is the granddaughter of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, the niece of Matthew Arnold, the wife of a cultivated editor and essayist. Her natal place was the Tasmanian Hobart Town, with its extra-insular view-point: she was reared in a social atmosphere in the best sense stimulating, and productive of fine thought and enlightened activities. Like George Eliot, her contact with literature and life has been broad and fruitful, her outlook has not felt the restriction of a limited nature. Her scholarship was indicated a dozen years ago by the admirable translation of the ‘Journal’ of the French thinker, Amiel. Mrs. Ward has done two important and serviceable things: she has proved that the content of fiction is wide enough to include politics and religion as legitimate artistic material; and she has drawn modern women who have brains as well as hearts, and the capacity to keep even step with men in the higher social activities. She has done this as George Meredith and Ibsen have done it, and has shown thereby that she grasps one meaning of the late nineteenth century. The New Woman is a dubious phrase; but after all, the type exists in its purity and power, and demands expression in literature. Mrs. Ward is a woman of the world who comprehends the gravest issues of the time; she is a woman of books without being a blue-stocking. She is a banner-bearer of the current analytic school. She believes in the aristocracy of intellect, the interest in character-building. In her art she has not forgotten that the heart counts for more than the head; that love is eternally in fiction, because it is in life, a grand mainspring of action. «After all,» she says in ‘Miss Bretherton,’ «beauty and charm and sex have in all ages been too much for the clever people who try to reckon without them.»

MARCELLA IN PEASANT SOCIETY

From ‘Marcella.’ Copyright 1894, by Macmillan & Co.

On the afternoon of the day which intervened between the Maxwells’ call and her introduction to the court, Marcella walked as usual down to the village. She was teeming with plans for her new kingdom, and could not keep herself out of it. And an entry in one of the local papers had suggested to her that Hurd might possibly find work in a parish some miles from Mellor. She must go and send him off there.

When Mrs. Hurd opened the door to her, Marcella was astonished to perceive behind her the forms of several other persons filling up the narrow space of the usually solitary cottage — in fact, a tea-party.

«Oh, come in, miss,» said Mrs. Hurd,— with some embarrassment, as though it occurred to her that her visitor might legitimately wonder to find a person of her penury entertaining company. Then lowering her voice, she hurriedly explained: «There’s Mrs. Brunt come in this afternoon to help me wi’ the washin’, while I finished my score of plait for the woman who takes 'em into town to-morrow. And there's old Patton an' his wife — you know 'em, miss? — them as lives in the parish houses top o' the common. He's walked out a few steps to-day. It's not often he's able, and when I see him through the door I said to 'em, 'If you'll come in an' take a cheer, I dessay them tea-leaves 'ull stan' another wettin': I haven't got nothink else.' And there's Mrs. Jellison: she came in along o' the Pattons. You can't say her no,— she's a queer one. Do you know her, miss?"

"Oh, bless yer, yes, yes. She knows me!" said a high, jocular voice, making Mrs. Hurd start: "she couldn't be long hereabouts without makkin' eëaste to know me. You coom in, miss. We're not afraid o' you — Lor' bless you!"

Mrs. Hurd stood aside for her visitor to pass in, looking round her the while, in some perplexity, to see whether there was a spare chair and room to place it. She was a delicate, willowy woman, still young in figure, with a fresh color belied by the gray circles under the eyes and the pinched sharpness of the features. The upper lip, which was pretty and childish, was raised a little over the teeth; the whole expression of the slightly open mouth was unusually soft and sensitive. On the whole, Minta Hurd was liked in the village, though she was thought a trifle "fine." The whole family, indeed, "kept theirsels to theirsels," and to find Mrs. Hurd with company was unusual. Her name, of course, was short for Araminta.

Marcella laughed as she caught Mrs. Jellison's remarks, and made her way in, delighted. For the present, these village people affected her like figures in poetry or drama. She saw them with the eye of the imagination through a medium provided by socialistic discussion, or by certain phases of modern art; and the little scene of Mrs. Hurd's tea-party took for her in an instant the dramatic zest and glamour.

"Look here, Mrs. Jellison," she said, going up to her, "I was just going to leave these apples for your grandson. Perhaps you'll take them, now you're here. They're quite sweet, though they look green. They're the best we've got, the gardener says."

"Oh, they are, are they?" said Mrs. Jellison, composedly looking up at her. "Well, put 'em down, miss. I daresay he'll eat 'em. He eats most things, and don't want no doctor's stuff nayther, though his mother do keep on at me for spoilin' his stummuck."

"You are just fond of that boy, aren't you, Mrs. Jellison?" said Marcella, taking a wooden stool,—the only piece of furniture left in the tiny cottage on which it was possible to sit,—and squeezing herself into a corner by the fire, whence she commanded the whole group. "No! don't you turn Mr. Patton out of that chair, Mrs. Hurd, or I shall have to go away."

For Mrs. Hurd, in her anxiety, was whispering in old Patton's ear that it might be well for him to give up her one wooden arm-chair, in which he was established, to Miss Boyce. But he, being old, deaf, and rheumatic, was slow to move, and Marcella's peremptory gesture bade her leave him in peace.

"Well, it's you that's the young 'un, ain't it, miss?" said Mrs. Jellison cheerfully. "Poor old Patton! he do get slow on his legs, don't you, Patton? But there, there's no helping it when you're turned of eighty."

And she turned upon him a bright, philosophic eye; being herself a young thing not much over seventy, and energetic accordingly. Mrs. Jellison passed for the village wit, and was at least talkative and excitable beyond her fellows.

"Well, *you* don't seem to mind getting old, Mrs. Jellison," said Marcella, smiling at her.

The eyes of all the old people round their tea-table were by now drawn irresistibly to Miss Boyce in the chimney corner,—to her slim grace, and the splendor of her large black hat and feathers. The new squire's daughter had so far taken them by surprise. Some of them, however, were by now in the second stage of critical observation,—none the less critical because furtive and inarticulate.

"Ah?" said Mrs. Jellison interrogatively, with a high, long-drawn note peculiar to her. "Well, I've never found you get forrarder wi' snarlin' over what you can't help. And there's mercies. When you've had a husband in his bed for fower year, miss, and he's took at last, you'll *know*."

She nodded emphatically. Marcella laughed.

"I know you were very fond of him, Mrs. Jellison, and looked after him very well too."

"Oh, I don't say nothin' about that," said Mrs. Jellison hastily. "But all the same you kin reckon it up, and see for yoursen. Fower year—an' fire up-stairs, an' fire down-stairs, an' fire all night, an' soomthin' allus wanted. An' he such an objeck afore he died! It do seem like a holiday now to sit a bit."

And she crossed her hands on her lap with a long breath of content. A lock of gray hair had escaped from her bonnet, across her wrinkled forehead, and gave her a half-careless rakish air. Her youth of long ago — a youth of mad spirits, and of an extraordinary capacity for physical enjoyment — seemed at times to pierce to the surface again, even through her load of years. But in general she had a dreamy, sunny look, as of one fed with humorous fancies, but disinclined often to the trouble of communicating them.

"Well, I missed my daughter, I kin tell you," said Mrs. Brunt with a sigh, "though she took a deal more lookin' after nor your good man, Mrs. Jellison."

Mrs. Brunt was a gentle, pretty old woman, who lived in another of the village almshouses, next door to the Pattons, and was always ready to help her neighbors in their domestic toils. Her last remaining daughter, the victim of a horrible spinal disease, had died some nine or ten months before the Boyces arrived at Mellor. Marcella had already heard the story several times; but it was part of her social gift that she was a good listener to such things even at the twentieth hearing.

"You wouldn't have her back, though," she said gently, turning towards the speaker.

"No, I wouldn't have her back, miss," said Mrs. Brunt, raising her hand to brush away a tear, — partly the result of feeling, partly of a long-established habit. "But I do miss her nights terrible! 'Mother, ain't it ten o'clock? — mother, look at the clock, do; — mother! ain't it time for my stuff, mother? oh, I do *hope* it is.' That was her stuff, miss, to make her sleep. And when she'd got it, she'd *groan* — you'd think she couldn't be asleep, and yet she was, dead-like — for two hours. I didn't get no rest with her, and now I don't seem to get no rest without her."

And again Mrs. Brunt put her hand up to her eyes.

"Ah, you were allus one for toilin' an' frettin'," said Mrs. Jellison calmly. "A body must get through wi' it when it's there, but I don't hold wi' thinkin' about it when it's done."

"I know one," said old Patton slyly, "that fretted about *her* darter when it didn't do her no good."

He had not spoken so far, but had sat with his hands on his stick, a spectator of the women's humors. He was a little hunched man, twisted and bent double with rheumatic gout, — the fruit of seventy years of field work. His small face was almost lost, dog like, under shaggy hair and overgrown eyebrows, both snow-white. He had a look of irritable eagerness, seldom however expressed in words. A sudden passion in the faded blue eyes; a quick spot of red in his old cheeks: these Marcella had often noticed in him, as though the flame of some inner furnace leapt. He had been a Radical and a rebel once in old rick-burning days, long before he lost the power in his limbs, and came down to be thankful for one of the parish almshouses. To his social betters he was now a quiet and peaceable old man, well aware of the cakes and ale to be got by good manners; but in the depths of him there were reminiscences and the ghosts of passions, which were still stirred sometimes by causes not always intelligible to the bystander.

He had rarely, however, physical energy enough to bring any emotion — even of mere worry at his physical ills — to the birth. The pathetic silence of age enwrapped him more and more. Still he could gibe the women sometimes, especially Mrs. Jellison, who was in general too clever for her company.

"Oh, you may talk, Patton!" said Mrs. Jellison with a little flash of excitement. "You do like to have your talk, don't you! Well, I dare say I *was* orkard with Isabella. I won't go for to say I *wasn't* orkard, for I *was*. She should ha' used me to 't before, if she wor took that way. She and I had just settled down comfortable after my old man went; and I didn't see no sense in it, an' I don't now. She might ha' let the men alone. She'd seen enough o' the worrit of 'em."

"Well, she did well for hersen," said Mrs. Brunt, with the same gentle melancholy. "She married a stiddy man as 'ull keep her well all her time, and never let her want for nothink."

"A sour, wooden-faced chap as iver I knew," said Mrs. Jellison grudgingly. "I don't have nothink to say to him, nor he to me. He thinks hissen the Grand Turk, he do, since they gi'en him his uniform, and made him full keeper. A nassty, domineerin' sort, I calls him. He's allus makin' bad blood wi' the yoong fellers when he don't need. It's the way he's got wi' him. But *I* don't make no account of him, an' I let him see 't."

All the tea-party grinned except Mrs. Hurd. The village was well acquainted with the feud between Mrs. Jellison and her son-in-law, George Westall, who had persuaded Isabella Jellison, at the mature age of thirty-five, to leave her mother and marry him; and was now one of Lord Maxwell's keepers, with good pay, and an excellent cottage some little way out of the village. Mrs. Jellison had never forgiven her daughter for deserting her, and was on lively terms of hostility with her son-in-law: but their only child, little Johnnie, had found the soft spot in his grandmother; and her favorite excitement in life, now that he was four years old, was to steal him from his parents and feed him on the things of which Isabella most vigorously disapproved.

Mrs. Hurd, as has been said, did not smile. At the mention of Westall, she got up hastily and began to put away the tea things.

Marcella meanwhile had been sitting thoughtful.

"You say Westall makes bad blood with the young men, Mrs. Jellison?" she said, looking up. "Is there much poaching in this village now, do you think?"

There was a dead silence. Mrs. Hurd was at the other end of the cottage with her back to Marcella; at the question, her hands paused an instant in their work. The eyes of all the old people — of Patton and his wife, of Mrs. Jellison, and pretty Mrs. Brunt — were fixed on the speaker; but nobody said a word, not even Mrs. Jellison. Marcella colored.

"Oh, you needn't suppose —" she said, throwing her beautiful head back, "you needn't suppose that *I* care about the game, or that I would ever be mean enough to tell anything that was told me. I know it *does* cause a great deal of quarreling and bad blood. I believe it does here — and I should like to know more about it. I want to make up my mind what to think. Of course, my father has got his land and his own opinions. And Lord Maxwell has too. But I am not bound to think like either of them, — I should like you to understand that. It seems to me right about all such things that people should inquire, and find out for themselves."

Still silence. Mrs. Jellison's mouth twitched, and she threw a sly provocative glance at old Patton, as though she would have liked to poke him in the ribs. But she was not going to help him out; and at last the one male in the company found himself obliged to clear his throat for reply.

"We're old folks, most on us, miss, 'cept Mrs. Hurd. We don't hear talk o' things now like as we did when we were younger. If you ast Mr. Harden, he'll tell you, I dessay."

Patton allowed himself an inward chuckle. Even Mrs. Jellison, he thought, must admit that he knew a thing or two as to the best way of dealing with the gentry.

But Marcella fixed him with her bright frank eyes.

«I had rather ask in the village,» she said. «If you don't know how it is now, Mr. Patton, tell me how it used to be when you were young. Was the preserving very strict about here? Were there often fights with the keepers, long ago?—in my grandfather's days? And do you think men poached because they were hungry, or because they wanted sport?»

Patton looked at her fixedly a moment, undecided: then her strong nervous youth seemed to exercise a kind of compulsion on him; perhaps too the pretty courtesy of her manner. He cleared his throat again, and tried to forget Mrs. Jellison, who would be sure to let him hear of it again, whatever he said.

«Well, I can't answer for 'em, miss, I'm sure; but if you ast *me*, I b'lieve ther's a bit o' boath in it. Yer see it's not in human natur, when a man's young and 's got his blood up, as he shouldn't want ter have his sport with the wild creeturs. Perhaps he see 'em when he's going to the wood with a wood cart, or he cooms across 'em in the turnips,—wounded birds, you understan', miss, perhaps the day after the gentry 'as been bangin' at 'em all day. An' he don't see, not for the life of him, why he shouldn't have 'em. Ther's been lots an' lots for the rich folks, an' he don't see why *ee* shouldn't have a few arter they've enjoyed theirselves. And mebbe he's eleven shillin' a week,—an' two-threy little chillen,—you understan', miss?»

«Of course I understand!» said Marcella eagerly, her dark cheek flushing. «Of course I do! But there's a good deal of game given away in these parts, isn't there? I know Lord Maxwell does, and they say Lord Winterbourne gives all his laborers rabbits, almost as many as they want.»

Her questions wound old Patton up as though he had been a disused clock. He began to feel a whirr among his creaking wheels, a shaking of all his rusty mind.

«Perhaps they do, miss,» he said; and his wife saw that he was beginning to tremble. «I dessay they do—I don't say nothink agen it—though theer's none of it cooms my way. But that isn't all the rights on it nayther; no, that it ain't. The laborin' man ee's glad enough to get a hare or a rabbit for his eatin'; but there's more in it nor that, miss. Ee's allus in the fields, that's where it is; ee can't help seein' the hares and the rabbits a-comin' in and out o' the woods, if it were iver so. Ee knows ivery run of ivery one on 'em; if a hare's started furthest corner o' t' field, he can tell yer whar she'll git in by, because he's allus there, you see, miss, an' it's the only thing he's got to take his mind off like. And then he sets a snare or two,—an' he gits very sharp at settin' on 'em,—an' he'll go out nights for the sport of it. Ther isn't many things *ee's* got to liven him up; an' he takes his chances o' goin' to jail; it's wuth it, ee thinks."

The old man's hands on his stick shook more and more visibly. Bygones of his youth had come back to him.

"Oh, I know! I know!" cried Marcella, with an accent half of indignation, half of despair. "It's the whole wretched system. It spoils those who've got, and those who haven't got. And there'll be no mending it till the *people* get the land back again, and till the rights on it are common to all."

"My! she do speak up, don't she?" said Mrs. Jellison, grinning again at her companions. Then stooping forward with one of her wild movements, she caught Marcella's arm: "I'd like to hear yer tell that to Lord Maxwell, miss. I likes a roompus, I do."

Marcella flushed and laughed.

"I wouldn't mind saying that or anything else to Lord Maxwell," she said proudly. "I'm not ashamed of anything I think."

"No, I'll bet you ain't," said Mrs. Jellison, withdrawing her hand. "Now then, Patton, you say what *you* thinks. You ain't got no vote now you're in the parish houses—I minds that. The quality don't trouble *you* at 'lection times. This yoong man, Muster Wharton, as is goin' round so free, promisin' yer the sun out o' the sky, iv yer'll only vote for him, so th' men say—*ee* don't coom an' set down along o' you an' me, an' cocker of us up as he do Joe Simmons or Jim Hurd here. But that don't matter. Yur thinkin's yur own, any way."

But she nudged him in vain. Patton had suddenly run down, and there was no more to be got out of him.

Not only had nerves and speech failed him as they were wont, but in his cloudy soul there had risen, even while Marcella was speaking, the inevitable suspicion which dogs the relations of the poor towards the richer class. This young lady, with her strange talk, was the new squire's daughter. And the village had already made up its mind that Richard Boyce was «a poor sort,» and «a hard sort» too, in his landlord capacity. He wasn't going to be any improvement on his brother — not a haporth! What was the good of this young woman talking as she did, when there were three summonses — as he, Patton, heard tell — just taken out by the sanitary inspector against Mr. Boyce for bad cottages? And not a farthing given away in the village neither, except perhaps the bits of food that the young lady herself brought down to the village now and then,— for which no one, in truth, felt any cause to be particularly grateful. Besides, what did she mean by asking questions about the poaching? Old Patton knew as well as anybody else in the village, that during Robert Boyce's last days, and after the death of his sportsman son, the Mellor estate had become the haunt of poachers from far and near; and that the trouble had long since spread into the neighboring properties, so that the Winterbourne and Maxwell keepers regarded it their most arduous business to keep watch on the men of Mellor. Of course the young woman knew it all; and she and her father wanted to know more. That was why she talked. Patton hardened himself against the creeping ways of the quality.

«I don't think naught,» he said roughly, in answer to Mrs. Jellison. «Thinkin' won't come atwixt me and the parish coffin when I'm took. I've no call to think, I tell yer.»

Marcella's chest heaved with indignant feeling.

«Oh, but Mr. Patton!» she cried, leaning forward to him, «won't it comfort you a bit, even if you can't live to see it, to think there's a better time coming? There must be. People can't go on like this always,— hating each other and trampling on each other. They're beginning to see it now, they are! When I was living in London, the persons I was with talked and thought of it all day. Some day, whenever the people choose,— for they've got the power now they've got the vote,— there'll be land for everybody; and in every village there'll be a council to manage things, and the laborer will count for just as much as the squire and the parson, and he'll be better educated and better fed, and care for many things he doesn't care for now. But all the same, if he wants sport and shooting, it will be there for him to get. For everybody will have a chance and a turn, and there'll be no bitterness between classes, and no hopeless pining and misery as there is now!»

The girl broke off, catching her breath. It excited her to say these things to these people, to these poor tottering old things who had lived out their lives to the end under the pressure of an iron system, and had no lien on the future, whatever paradise it might bring. Again, the situation had something foreseen and dramatic in it. She saw herself, as the preacher, sitting on her stool beside the poor grate; she realized as a spectator the figures of the women and the old man played on by the firelight, the white, bare, damp-stained walls of the cottage, and in the background the fragile though still comely form of Minta Hurd, who was standing with her back to the dresser and her head bent forward, listening to the talk, while her fingers twisted the straw she plaited eternally from morning till night for a wage of about 1*s.* 3*d.* a week.

Her mind was all aflame with excitement and defiance,—defiance of her father, Lord Maxwell, Aldous Raeburn. Let him come, her friend, and see for himself what she thought it right to do and say in this miserable village. Her soul challenged him, longed to provoke him! Well, she was soon to meet him, and in a new and more significant relation and environment. The fact made her perception of the whole situation the more rich and vibrant.

Patton, while these broken thoughts and sensations were coursing through Marcella's head, was slowly revolving what she had been saying, and the others were waiting for him.

At last he rolled his tongue round his dry lips, and delivered himself by a final effort.

"Them as likes, miss, may believe as how things are going to happen that way, but yer won't ketch me! Them as 'ave got 'ull *keep*,"—he let his stick sharply down on the floor,—"an' them as 'aven't got 'ull 'ave to go without and *lump it*, as long as you're alive, miss: you mark my words!"

"O Lor', you wor allus one for makin' a poor mouth, Patton!" said Mrs. Jellison. She had been sitting with her arms folded across her chest, part absent, part amused, part malicious. "The young lady speaks beautiful, just like a book, she do. An' she's likely to know a deal better nor poor persons like you and me. All *I* kin say is,—if there's goin' to be dividin' up of other folks' property when I'm gone, I hope George Westall won't get nothink of it! He's bad enough as 'tis. Isabella 'ud have a fine time if *ee* took to drivin' of his carriage."

The others laughed out, Marcella at their head; and Mrs. Jellison subsided, the corners of her mouth still twitching, and her eyes shining as though a host of entertaining notions were trooping through her, which however she preferred to amuse herself with rather than the public. Marcella looked at Patton thoughtfully.

"You've been all your life in this village, haven't you, Mr. Patton?" she asked him.

"Born top o' Witchett's Hill, miss. An' my wife here, she wor born just a house or two further along, an' we two been married sixty-one year come next March."

He had resumed his usual almshouse tone, civil and a little plaintive. His wife behind him smiled gently at being spoken of. She had a long fair face, and white hair surmounted by a battered black bonnet; a mouth set rather on one side, and a more observant and refined air than most of her neighbors. She sighed while she talked, and spoke in a delicate quaver.

"D'ye know, miss," said Mrs. Jellison, pointing to Mrs. Patton, "as she kep' school when she was young?"

"Did you, Mrs. Patton?" asked Marcella in her tone of sympathetic interest. "The school wasn't very big then, I suppose?"

"About forty, miss," said Mrs. Patton with a sigh. "There was eighteen the rector paid for, and eighteen Mr. Boyce paid for, and the rest paid for themselves."

Her voice dropped gently, and she sighed again like one weighted with an eternal fatigue.

"And what did you teach them?"

"Well, I taught them the plaitin', miss, and as much readin' and writin' as I knew myself. It wasn't as high as it is now, you see, miss," and a delicate flush dawned on the old cheek, as Mrs. Patton threw a glance round her companions as though appealing to them not to tell stories of her.

But Mrs. Jellison was implacable. "It wor she taught *me*," she said, nodding at Marcella and pointing sideways to Mrs. Patton. "She had a queer way wi' the hard words, I can tell yer, miss. When she couldn't tell 'em herself she'd never own up to it. 'Say Jerusalem, my dear, and pass on.' That's what she'd say, she would, sure's you're alive! I've heard her do it times. An' when Isabella an' me used to read the Bible, nights, I'd allus rayther do 't than be beholden to me own darter. It gets yer through, anyway."

"Well, it wor a good word," said Mrs. Patton, blushing and mildly defending herself. "It didn't do none of yer any harm."

"Oh, an' before her, miss, I went to a school to another woman, as lived up Shepherd's Row. You remember her, Betsy Brunt?"

Mrs. Brunt's worn eyes began already to gleam and sparkle.

"Yis, I recolleck very well, Mrs. Jellison. She wor Mercy Moss; an' a goodish deal of trouble you'd use to get me into wi' Mercy Moss, all along o' your tricks."

Mrs. Jellison, still with folded arms, began to rock herself gently up and down as though to stimulate memory.

"My word, but Muster Maurice — he wor the clergyman here then, miss — wor set on Mercy Moss. He and his wife they flattered and cockered her up. Ther wor nobody like her for keepin' school, not in their eyes — till one midsummer — she — well, she — I don't want to say nothink onpleasant — *but she transgressed*," said Mrs. Jellison, nodding mysteriously,— triumphant however in the unimpeachable delicacy of her language, and looking round the circle for approval.

"What do you say?" asked Marcella innocently. "What did Mercy Moss do?"

Mrs. Jellison's eyes danced with malice and mischief, but her mouth shut like a vise. Patton leaned forward on his stick, shaken with a sort of inward explosion; his plaintive wife laughed under her breath till she must needs sigh, because laughter tired her old bones. Mrs. Brunt gurgled gently. And finally Mrs. Jellison was carried away.

"Oh, my goodness me, don't you make me tell tales o' Mercy Moss!" she said at last, dashing the water out of her eyes with an excited tremulous hand. "She's been dead and gone these forty year,— married and buried mos' respeckable,— it 'ud be a burning shame to bring up tales agen her now. Them as tittle-tattles about dead folks needn't look to lie quiet theirselves in their graves. I've said it times, and I'll say it again. What are you lookin' at me for, Betsy Brunt?"

And Mrs. Jellison drew up suddenly with a fierce glance at Mrs. Brunt.

"Why, Mrs. Jellison, I niver meant no offense," said Mrs. Brunt hastily.

"I won't stand no insinooating," said Mrs. Jellison with energy. "If you've got soomthink agen me, you may out wi' 't an' niver mind the young lady."

But Mrs. Brunt, much flurried, retreated amid a shower of excuses, pursued by her enemy, who was soon worrying the whole little company as a dog worries a flock of sheep; snapping here and teasing there, chattering at the top of her voice in broad dialect as she got more and more excited, and quite as ready to break her wit on Marcella as on anybody else. As for the others, most of them had known little else for weeks than alternations of toil and sickness; they were as much amused and excited to-night by Mrs. Jellison's audacities as a Londoner is by his favorite low comedian at his favorite music-hall. They played chorus to her, laughed, baited her; even old Patton was drawn against his will into a caustic sociability.

Marcella meanwhile sat on her stool, her chin upon her hand, and her full glowing eyes turned upon the little spectacle, absorbing it all with a covetous curiosity.

The light-heartedness, the power of enjoyment, left in these old folk, struck her dumb. Mrs. Brunt had an income of two-and-sixpence a week, *plus* two loaves from the parish, and one of the parish or «charity» houses,—a hovel, that is to say, of one room, scarcely fit for human habitation at all. She had lost five children, was allowed two shillings a week by two laborer sons, and earned sixpence a week—about—by continuous work at «the plait.» Her husband had been run over by a farm cart and killed; up to the time of his death his earnings averaged about twenty-eight pounds a year. Much the same with the Pattons. They had lost eight children out of ten, and were now mainly supported by the wages of a daughter in service. Mrs. Patton had of late years suffered agonies and humiliations indescribable, from a terrible illness which the parish doctor was quite incompetent to treat; being all through a singularly sensitive woman, with a natural instinct for the decorous and the beautiful.

Amazing! Starvation wages; hardships of sickness and pain; horrors of birth and horrors of death; wholesale losses of kindred and friends; the meanest surroundings; the most sordid cares,—of this mingled cup of village fate every person in the room had drunk, and drunk deep. Yet here in this autumn twilight they laughed and chattered and joked,—weird, wrinkled children, enjoying an hour's rough play in a clearing of the storm! Dependent from birth to death on squire, parson, parish, crushed often and ill-treated according to their own ideas, but bearing so little ill-will; amusing themselves with their own tragedies even, if they could but sit by a fire and drink a neighbor's cup of tea.

Her heart swelled and burned within her. Yes, the old people were past hoping for; mere wreck and driftwood on the shore, the springtide of death would soon have swept them all into unremembered graves. But the young men and women, the children, were they too to grow up, and grow old like these,—the same smiling, stunted, ignobly submissive creatures? One woman at least would do her best with her one poor life to rouse some of them to discontent and revolt!

DAVID AND ELISE

From ‹The History of David Grieve.› Copyright 1891, by Macmillan & Co.

David stared at Elise. He had grown very pale. She too was white to the lips. The violence and passion of her speech had exhausted her; her hands trembled in her lap. A wave of emotion swept through him. Her words were insolently bitter: why then this impression of something wounded and young and struggling,—at war with itself and the world,—proclaiming loneliness and *sehnsucht*, while it flung anger and reproach?

He dropped on one knee, hardly knowing what he did. Most of the students about had left their work for a while; no one was in sight but a *gardien* whose back was turned to them, and a young man in the remote distance. He picked up a brush she had let fall, pressed it into her reluctant hand, and laid his forehead against the hand for an instant.

"You misunderstand me," he said, with a broken, breathless utterance. "You are quite wrong—quite mistaken. There are not such thoughts in me as you think. The world matters nothing to me either. I am alone too; I have always been alone. You meant everything that was heavenly and kind—you must have meant it. I am a stupid idiot! But I could be your friend—if you would permit it."

He spoke with an extraordinary timidity and slowness. He forgot all his scruples, all pride—everything. As he knelt there, so close to her delicate slimness, to the curls on her white neck, to the quivering lips and great defiant eyes, she seemed to him once more a being of another clay from himself—beyond any criticism his audacity could form. He dared hardly touch her; and in his heart there swelled the first irrevocable wave of young passion.

She raised her hand impetuously and began to paint again. But suddenly a tear dropped on to her knee. She brushed it away, and her wild smile broke.

"Bah!" she said: "what a scene, what a pair of children! What was it all about? I vow I haven't an idea. You are an excellent *farceur*, Monsieur David! One can see well that you have read George Sand."

He sat down on a little three-legged stool she had brought with her, and held her box open on his knee. In a minute or two they were talking as though nothing had happened. She was giving him a fresh lecture on Velasquez, and he had resumed his rôle of pupil and listener. But their eyes avoided each other; and once, when in taking a tube from the box he held, her fingers brushed against his hand, she flushed involuntarily, and moved her chair a foot further away.

"Who is that?" she asked, suddenly looking round the corner of her canvas. "*Mon Dieu!* M. Regnault! How does he come here? They told me he was at Granada."

She sat transfixed, a joyous excitement illuminating every feature. And there, a few yards from them, examining the Rembrandt 'Supper at Emmaüs' with a minute and absorbed attention, was the young man he had noticed in the distance a few minutes before. As Elise spoke, the new-comer apparently heard his name, and turned. He put up his eyeglass, smiled, and took off his hat.

"Mademoiselle Delaunay! I find you where I left you, at the feet of the master! Always at work! You are indefatigable. Taranne tells me great things of you. 'Ah,' he says, 'if the men would work like the women!' I assure you, he makes us smart for it. May I look? Good—very good! a great improvement on last year; stronger, more knowledge in it. That hand wants study—but you will soon put it right. Ah, Velasquez! That a man should be great, one can bear that,—but so great! It is an offense to the rest of us mortals. But one cannot realize him out of Madrid. I often sigh for the months I spent copying in the Museo. There is a repose of soul in copying a great master—don't you find it? One rests from one's own efforts awhile; the spirit of the master descends into yours, gently, profoundly."

He stood beside her, smiling kindly, his hat and gloves in his hands, perfectly dressed, an air of the great world about his look and bearing which differentiated him wholly from all other persons whom David had yet seen in Paris. In physique too he was totally unlike the ordinary Parisian type. He was a young athlete,— vigorous, robust, broad-shouldered, tanned by sun and wind. Only his blue eye — so subtle, melancholy, passionate — revealed the artist and the thinker.

Elise was evidently transported by his notice of her. She talked to him eagerly of his pictures in the Salon; especially of a certain 'Salome,' which, as David presently gathered, was the sensation of the year. She raved about the qualities of it,— the words «color,» «poignancy,» «force,» recurring in the quick phrases.

«No one talks of your *success* now, monsieur. It is another word. *C'est la gloire elle-même qui vous parle à l'oreille!* »*

As she let fall the most characteristic of all French nouns, a slight tremor passed across the young man's face. But the look which succeeded it was one of melancholy; the blue eyes took a steely hardness.

« Perhaps a lying spirit, mademoiselle. And what matter, so long as everything one does disappoints oneself? What a tyrant is art! insatiable, adorable! You know it. We serve our king on our knees, and he deals us the most miserly gifts.»

«It is the service itself repays,» she said eagerly, her chest heaving.

«True!— most true! But what a struggle always! No rest — no content. And there is no other way. One must seek, grope, toil — then produce rapidly — in a flash — throw what you have done behind you — and so on to the next problem, and the next. There is no end to it; there never can be. But you hardly came here this morning, I imagine, mademoiselle, to hear me prate! I wish you good-day and good-by. I came over for a look at the Salon; but to-morrow I go back to Spain. I can't breathe now for long away from my sun and my South! Adieu, mademoiselle. I am told your prospects, when the voting comes on, are excellent. May the gods inspire the jury.»

He bowed, smiled, and passed on, carrying his lion-head and kingly presence down the gallery, which had now filled up again;

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*«It is Glory herself who whispers to you now!»

and where, so David noticed, person after person turned as he came near, with the same flash of recognition and pleasure he had seen upon Elise's face.

A wild jealousy of the young conqueror invaded the English lad.

"Who is he?" he asked.

Elise, woman-like, divined him in a moment. She gave him a sidelong glance, and went back to her painting.

"That," she said quietly, "is Henri Regnault. Ah, you know nothing of our painters. I can't make you understand. For me he is a young god; there is a halo round his head. He has grasped his fame—the fame we poor creatures are all thirsting for. It began last year with the Prim—General Prim on horseback—oh, magnificent! a passion! an energy! This year it is the 'Salome.' About—Gautier—all the world—have lost their heads over it. If you go to see it at the Salon, you will have to wait your turn. Crowds go every day for nothing else. Of course there are murmurs. They say the study of Fortuny has done him harm. Nonsense! People discuss him because he is becoming a master; no one discusses the nonentities. *They* have no enemies. Then he is a sculptor, musician, athlete,—well born besides,—all the world is his friend. But with it all so simple—*bon camarade* even for poor scrawlers like me. *Je l'adore!*"

"So it seems," said David.

The girl smiled over her painting. But after a bit she looked up with a seriousness—nay, a bitterness—in her siren's face, which astonished him.

"It is not amusing to take you in,—you are too ignorant. What do you suppose Henri Regnault matters to me? His world is as far above mine as Velasquez's art is above my art. But how can a foreigner understand our shades and grades? Nothing but *success*, but *la gloire*, could ever lift me into his world. Then indeed I should be everybody's equal, and it would matter to nobody that I had been a Bohemian and a *déclassée.*"

She gave a little sigh of excitement, and threw her head back to look at her picture. David watched her.

"I thought," he said ironically, "that a few minutes ago you were all for Bohemia. I did not suspect these social ambitions."

"All women have them—all artists deny them," she said recklessly. "There, explain me as you like, Monsieur David. But don't read my riddle too soon, or I shall bore you.—Allow me to ask you a question."

She laid down her brushes and looked at him with the utmost gravity. His heart beat; he bent forward.

"Are you ever hungry, Monsieur David?"

He sprang up, half enraged, half ashamed.

"Where can we get some food?"

"That is my affair," she said, putting up her brushes. "Be humble, monsieur, and take a lesson in Paris."

And out they went together, he beside himself with delight of accompanying her, and proudly carrying her box and satchel. How her little feet slipped in and out of her pretty dress! how, as they stood on the top of the great flight of stairs leading down into the court of the Louvre, the wind from outside blew back the curls from her brow, and ruffled the violets in her hat, the black lace about her tiny throat! It was an enchantment to follow and to serve her. She led him through the Tuileries Gardens and the Place de la Concorde to the Champs Elysées. The fountains leapt in the sun; the river blazed between the great white buildings of its banks; to the left was the gilded dome of the Invalides and the mass of the Corps Législatif; while in front of them rose the long ascent to the Arc de l'Étoile, set in vivid green on either hand. Everywhere was space, glitter, magnificence. The gayety of Paris entered into the Englishman and took possession.

Presently, as they wandered up the Champs Elysées, they passed a great building to the left. Elise stopped and clasped her hands in front of her with a little nervous spasmodic gesture.

"That," she said, "is the Salon. My fate lies there. When we have had some food, I will take you in to see."

She led him a little further up the avenue; then took him aside through cunningly devised labyrinths of green till they came upon a little café restaurant among the trees, where people sat under an awning, and the wind drove the spray of a little fountain hither and thither among the bushes. It was gay, foreign, romantic, unlike anything David had ever seen in his northern world. He sat down, with Barbier's stories running in his head. Mademoiselle Delaunay was George Sand—independent, gifted, on the road to fame like that great *déclassée* of old; and he was her friend and comrade,—a humble soldier, a camp follower, in the great army of letters.

Their meal was of the lightest. This descent on the Champs Elysées had been a freak on Elise's part, who wished to do nothing so *banal* as to take her companion to the Palais Royal. But the restaurant she had chosen, though of a much humbler kind than those which the rich tourist commonly associates with this part of Paris, was still a good deal more expensive than she had rashly supposed. She opened her eyes gravely at the charges; abused herself extravagantly for a lack of *savoir vivre:* and both with one accord declared that it was too hot to eat. But upon such eggs and such green peas as they did allow themselves—a portion of each, scrupulously shared—David at any rate was prepared to live to the end of the chapter.

Afterwards, over the coffee and the cigarettes,—Elise taking her part in both,—they lingered for one of those hours which make the glamour of youth. Confidences flowed fast between them. His French grew suppler and more docile, answered more truly to the individuality behind it. He told her of his bringing-up, of his wandering with the sheep on the mountains, of his reading among the heather, of 'Lias and his visions, of Hannah's cruelties and Louie's tempers,—that same idyl of peasant life to which Dora had listened some months before. But how differently told! Each different listener changes the tale, readjusts the tone. But here also the tale pleased. Elise, for all her leanings towards new schools in art, had the Romantic's imagination, and the Romantic's relish for things foreign and unaccustomed. The English boy and his story seemed to her both charming and original. Her artist's eye followed the lines of the ruffled black head, and noted the red-brown of the skin. She felt a wish to draw him,—a wish which had entirely vanished in the case of Louie.

« Your sister has taken a dislike to me,» she said to him once, coolly. «And for me, I am afraid of her. Ah! and she broke my glass! »

She shivered, and a look of anxiety and depression invaded her small face. He guessed that she was thinking of her pictures, and began timidly to speak to her about them. When they returned to the world of art, his fluency left him; he felt crushed beneath the weight of his own ignorance and her accomplishment.

"Come and see them!" she said, springing up. "I am tired of my Infanta. Let her be awhile. Come to the Salon, and I will show you 'Salome.' Or are you sick of pictures? What do you want to see? *Ça m'est égal.** I can always go back to my work."

She spoke with a cavalier lightness which teased and piqued him.

"I wish to go where you go," he said flushing; "to see what you see."

She shook her little head.

"No compliments, Monsieur David. We are serious persons, you and I. Well, then, for a couple of hours, *soyons camarades!*"

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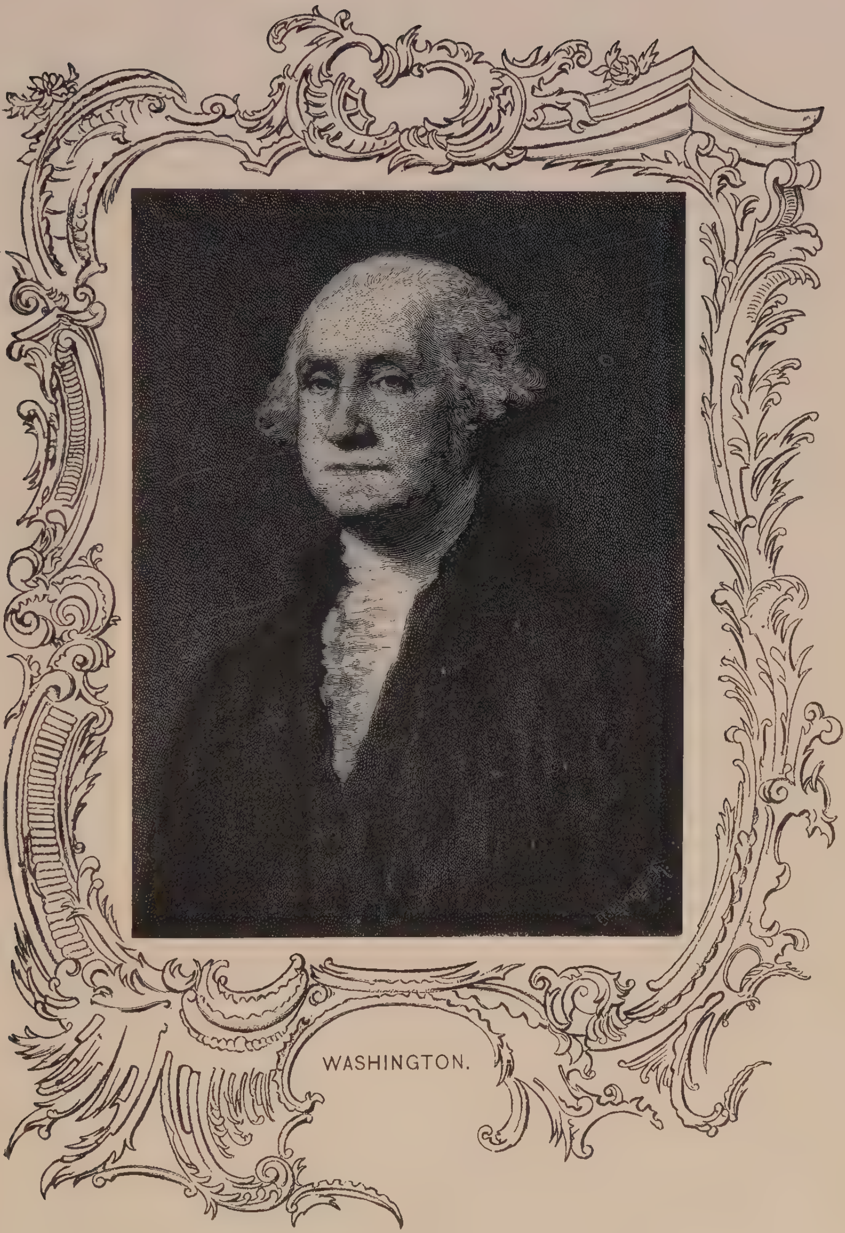
*"It's all the same to me."



WASHINGTON.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(1732–1799)

The Farewell Address of Washington is infused with that quality of his character which appealed most forcibly to his contemporaries, and which has governed posterity's estimate of him: entire and consistent devotion to a fixed ideal, the fruit of a genius for patriotism. In the light of this genius alone can the greatness of Washington be understood and appreciated; seen out of its circle he is merely a colonial country gentleman of indifferent education. As a boy he composed a set of rules of conduct, such as any well-mannered boy might lay down for his guidance. It ends however with these significant words: «Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.» Washington's country was his conscience. Not many men are intelligent patriots, since the heat of the heart confuses the judgment; nor are many consistent patriots, since the successful servant is perilously near the office of master. The pre-eminence of Washington is founded upon his intelligence and consistency in conducting «one of the greatest revolutions of this or of any time,» in serving his country as President, in retiring from office so soon as he perceived that his services were no longer essential. The Farewell Address will remain one of the most significant and important of historical documents, because it embodies the very essence of a sober and faithful patriotism.

The life of Washington proves how much can be effected by single-mindedness in the pursuit of an ideal. His contemporaries who met him during the Revolution, or during his terms of office, seemed at a loss to account for his greatness; as if the man were constantly hiding behind his services. «Something of stillness envelops the actions of Washington,» Châteaubriand wrote. Many accounts of his personal appearance remain: few exact impressions of his personality. His letters and his diaries throw little light upon him, neither do they discover the secret of his extraordinary power. The Farewell Address is perhaps the most truthful portrait of him which remains. He was born in Virginia on February 22d, 1732, of a family which had come from England about the middle of the seventeenth century. Of his early life little is known, save a few apocryphal stories. His education was elementary: he was brought up on his father's plantation, leading a free out-of-door life; he emerged into clear view first as a surveyor of the lands of Lord Fairfax, father-in-law of his half-brother Lawrence. Four years later, when he was about twenty years of age, he became heir to the family property of Mount Vernon. In 1753 Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie appointed him commander of the northern military district of Virginia. The French and Indian War breaking out in the same year, Washington was sent by the Governor to warn the French away from the new forts in western Pennsylvania. The intelligence and clear judgment which he displayed in the execution of this commission led to his being appointed, in 1755, commander-in-chief of all the Virginia forces, with the task of defending a frontier of three hundred and fifty miles with seven hundred and fifty men. In Braddock's campaign he came rapidly to the front as an officer of extraordinary coolness, courage, and military skill. At the close of this war he married Martha Dandridge, the widow of Daniel Parke Custis, and settled down to twenty years of retirement in Virginia. In 1774 the Virginia convention appointed him one of seven delegates to the Continental Congress; at which Congress, on the motion of John Adams, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the colonies. On July 2d of the same year he took command of the army at Cambridge, Massachusetts. From that time on he was engaged in a series of brilliant campaigns, which ended only when the object of the war had been fully attained. James Thacher, a surgeon in the Revolution, who kept a military diary, has left this description of Washington the general:—

> «The personal appearance of our commander-in-chief is that of a perfect gentleman and accomplished warrior. He is remarkably tall,—full six feet,—erect and well-proportioned. The strength and proportion of his joints and muscles appear to be commensurate with the pre-eminent powers of his mind. The serenity of his countenance, and majestic gracefulness of his deportment, impart a strong impression of that dignity and grandeur which are peculiar characteristics; and no one can stand in his presence without feeling the ascendency of his mind, and associating with his countenance the idea of wisdom, philanthropy, magnanimity, and patriotism. There is a fine symmetry in the features of his face indicative of a benign and dignified spirit. His nose is straight, and his eyes inclined to blue. He wears his hair in a becoming cue, and from his forehead it is turned back, and powdered in a manner which adds to the military air of his appearance. He displays a native gravity, but devoid of all appearance of ostentation. His uniform dress is a blue coat with two brilliant epaulets, buff-colored under clothes, and a three-cornered hat with a black cockade. He is constantly equipped with an elegant small-sword, boots and spurs, in readiness to mount his noble charger.»

In 1783 Washington resigned his commission, and went again into retirement, until his election to the Presidency in 1787. After serving two terms, he spent the remainder of his life upon his Mount Vernon estate in Virginia. He died in 1799.

«I felt on his death, with my countrymen,» wrote Thomas Jefferson, «Verily a great man hath fallen in Israel.»

Washington Irving said of him: «The character of Washington may want some of those poetical elements which dazzle and delight the multitude; but it possessed fewer inequalities, and a rarer union of virtues, than perhaps ever fall to the lot of one man.»

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

THE period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference to what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself: and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors which it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise; and as an instructive example in our annals that, under circumstances in which the passions — agitated in every direction — were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not infrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, — the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated by this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue;—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop: but solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation; and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget an encouragement to it,—your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence: the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity in every shape; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of external and internal enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed: it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness,—that you should cherish a cordial habitual and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can, in any event, be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts,—of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of the common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort; and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own production, to the weight, influence, and future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage — whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power — must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations: and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from these broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown *military* establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty; and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is, that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty; and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind; and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations: Northern and Southern — Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen, in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them, of a policy in the general government, and in the Atlantic States, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties — that with Great Britain, and that with Spain — which secure to them everything they could desire in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely, for the preservation of these advantages, on the union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts, can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws; all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe, the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities,—are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party,—often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community,—and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the

Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system; and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion: and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian.— It is indeed little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction — more able or more fortunate than his competitors — turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself, through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain that there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame; lest instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing it and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasion by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern: some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible: avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature; alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions,—obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject: at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no real interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others; which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens), the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote, relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world,— so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed — in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them — conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied as experience and circumstances shall dictate: constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism: this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and nurture its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the

Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever-favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES, September 17th, 1796.

DAVID ATWOOD WASSON

(1823–1887)

In the life and writings of David Atwood Wasson, New England Transcendentalism found a singularly perfect expression, a fine, clean, austere embodiment, conspicuous even in that rare era of incarnate philosophy. He had not the genius of Emerson, nor the glowing beauty of Parker: he dwelt for the most part in the chambers of the pure intellect, looking from their high windows toward the stars. He taught individualism, and the oneness of the soul with God, and the unity of all things seen and unseen. In him, perhaps, as in many of his brethren, the forces which are now producing the «pestilence-stricken multitude» of writers whose conception of individualism is love and hate let loose,—in him, these same forces showed their mystical white side. To him also, love was all, but love was also law; man was all, but man was all through God: to him also the natural man was pure; but the natural man was the spiritual man. Like many of the clamorous school of literature, nothing less than the universe would suffice Wasson; but he believed that man receives his inheritance of the universe through harmony with its moral law.

He came into his own intellectual freedom through much trial. Born in Brooksville, a coast town of Maine, May 14th, 1823, the child of a ship-builder, his childhood was spent under a double tyranny of stern theology and stern labor. He took a child's privilege of hating Deity and loving dear Nature; so grew with a fragmentary schooling into a youth who began to find ways of his own into the unseen, and now congenial, world. He passed through North Yarmouth Academy, through Phillips Academy, and partly through Bowdoin College. A few years before entering college, an accident in a wrestling match left him with the ill-health which all his life hampered him. His college course was succeeded by law studies at Belfast, but these were soon discontinued. Carlyle was speaking to him through 'Sartor Resartus'; his soul was thirsty for reality.

Entering the Theological School in Bangor in 1849, he remained there two years, and was then ordained pastor of an evangelical church in Groveland, Massachusetts. His intellectual development had now brought him into that position of entire acquiescence with the demands of the Whole, the Good, and the Beautiful, which may be so easily confounded with indifference. His congregation admired but could not comprehend his exquisite mysticism, which bound the reason and the soul in so loving a marriage. Some doubted; the crisis came when Wasson preached a sermon against what were to him obnoxious doctrines in the orthodox faith. His own orthodoxy seemed to his congregation too much a part of the sunlight and air. He was forced to form an independent church. His career after this was largely determined by the exigencies of ill-health. For two years he was pastor of Theodore Parker's Congregational Society in Boston. He resided for a time in Concord and in Worcester; he was for three years storekeeper of the custom-house in West Medford; he lived for three years in Germany. Wherever he was, he carried on his old battle with disease; yet wrote and read incessantly, and lived his life of thought, which seemed ever to grow clearer and stronger. He was in the ranks of the rationalists, yet his spirituality guided him always into the serene air of harmony. He died in West Medford in 1887.

He wrote a great number of essays, which were published in the New-Englander, the North American Review, the Atlantic Monthly, the Radical, and other magazines. The subjects of these essays cover a wide range, but there is between them the bond of an underlying unity. Wasson, whose creed embraced the universe, could not well touch upon a subject outside that creed. He looks upon art, upon literature, upon religion, upon science, in the clear broad light of the absolute. His is the temper of a brother to the universe; yet for this reason his essays lack perhaps the home-like quality,— the inferior, necessary, limited outlook. They are written in strong nervous English, in an austere yet graceful style, well expressive of Wasson's spirit. His poetry possesses many of the characteristics of his prose; being the fruit of noble feeling, as the essays of noble thought. Both his prose and his verse offer an escape from the heated air of passion-haunted literature, into the wintry sunshine of a calm and exalted philosophy.

THE GENIUS OF WOMAN

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An unknown friend has asked me to write upon woman. The terms in which the request was made express a spirit so large, while also it was accompanied by an offer so generous, that I do not feel at liberty to refuse, though the theme appalls me. To write worthily upon man in general were not easy; but when one selects for a subject that half of mankind whose nature differs from that of the other moiety by its greater delicacy and subtilty, by its grace of concealment, by its charm that only is a charm because it defies analysis, by powers whose peculiar character it is to tread untraceable paths and work more finely than explicit thought,—then the difficulty of treatment becomes such that I wonder at my own temerity in attempting the topic, and am half inclined to find in my consent an argument of my unfitness to write upon it. Yet it is a matter which I have a good deal meditated, and one upon which light is greatly needed. . . .

At present nothing is so discouraging as the shadow which passes over the face of earnest women when one remarks that from their sex has never proceeded an Iliad, a Parthenon, an 'Organon' or 'Principia.' And when the more hopeful among them reply, "Give us equal opportunity, and see what we will do to stop your boast," the case becomes more discouraging still. The date-palm is not pine, oak, or teak, but thinks it may become such, and furnish timbers and masts for ships some day. Why this false desire? Why is not woman the first to remark and insist upon the fact that she does not build, whether epics or temples or systems of thought, for the very good reason that she has a genius of her own, and is not a reduced copy of man? The statement makes for her, not against her; it is argument of superiority in a kind and manner of her own. Let her respect her own nature. Let her, if she *must* make assertion in her own behalf, maintain that her actual performance in the history of humanity needs no imaginary eking out to bear comparison with masculine achievement. This I, for one, strenuously affirm. And in order to throw some little light upon this matter, which has been darkened so deplorably, I will endeavor in the present essay to offer some suggestions upon the genius of woman.

1. The primary distinction seems to me this: that Thought is masculine; Sentiment, feminine. Of course, both these must be found, more or less, in every human being: but in a manly character the one will predominate; in a womanly character, the other. This characteristic pre-eminence being secured, the subordinate faculty may exist in any degree of power; no measure of sentiment, which leaves thought sovereign, detracts from manliness; no vigor of intellect, which does not dispute the empire of sentiment, diminishes the grace of woman. Indeed, each

character, while remaining true to its own ideal, is richer in proportion to the presence of the opposite element. . . .

2. As the eye of sentiment, woman has an intuitive perception, requiring always the nearness of its objects; but so quick, so subtle and untraceable in its action, that for want of any more distinctive term, we can often give it no other name than feeling. She carries divining-rods, mysterious to herself as to another; can render no reason for what she affirms, but says, "Here it is; this is it." Her conclusions are reached neither by induction nor by deduction, but by divination. She makes little use of general principles, defies logic; cannot be convinced against her will, it is said,—that is, against her feeling; is very commonly mistaken when she generalizes, and has a kind of infallibility in particulars. To argue against her persuasion is raining upon a duck, or reasoning against the wind. She is right and she is wrong in the teeth of all logic; can easily be confuted, but all the world will not convince her unless she is persuaded,—that is, unless her sentiment is won over. She is as often mistaken as man, but in a wholly different way; for she sees best where he is blind, and has a dim vision for that which his eye is best fitted to discern.

This intelligence, so intimate with feeling as to be indistinguishable from it,—this winged sensibility, this divination at close quarters,—has but to be comprehended to make it clear why woman does not build epics and systems of thought. She has not a constructive genius, because she does not work so remotely, and through such long channels of mediation, as the architectural genius must. Because she is a diviner, she cannot be a builder. . . .

Rejoice, O women, that you do not produce Homers and Newtons. It is that blessed incapability, due to another mode of human genius, which has again and again held the world fast to the breasts of living, foodful Nature, when the masculine world had lost itself among the dead dust and débris of its own labor. At this very moment my hope for modern civilization clings to the spirit of woman, to this divining sensibility whose blessed *cannot* is the cable that holds humanity to the shores of life. If woman could cope with man in his own form of labor and excellence, she could also lose herself with him. But, thank God, we are all born of mothers, and never can quite leave our cradles behind us. And ever and anon when the learned scribes of the world have buried the Biblical heart out of sight beneath their traditions,— that is, beneath representative forms of imagination and thought built out of other forms, and those out of others still,— there arises some one to say, Become as little children; go back to the mother heart of humanity, to this matrix of pure, divining sensibility, and, newly born thence, become again living souls. If that command be heeded, a new epoch arises, and the wrinkled Tithonus obtains the blessing along with the gift of immortality.

I do not intimate that woman should forbear attempting a literary career, nor that she is incapable of high excellence in such labor. On the contrary, I think she can contribute to literature work which in its own kind the other sex will scarcely be able to equal,— can give us a literature of sentiment without sentimentality, which would be a precious addition to the world's wealth and resource. The religious lyric or hymn would well befit her; and indeed the tenderest hymn in the English language, and pure in tone as tender in feeling, was written by a woman,— 'Nearer, my God, to Thee.' The devotion of love has never been expressed in our tongue as by Mrs. Browning in the 'Portuguese Sonnets'; a lady whose genius I value far above that of her husband, though in the later years of her life she seemed to have been bewitched by him, and fell to his jerky style,— a sort of St. Vitus's dance with pen and ink. Mrs. Howe's 'Army Hymn' was perhaps the most lyrical expression of devout feeling brought forth by our war. The underlying excellence of 'Uncle Tom' was its pure appeal to sentiment: just this made it irresistible. Uncle Tom himself is feminine to the core,— a nun in trousers. Miss Cobbe's 'Intuitive Morals' assumes the feminine point of view by its very title: woman, by her very nature, *must* believe in intuitive morals; and by bringing her own native method to the treatment of this topic can render invaluable service. . . .

Personality in the pure sense is Spirit without individual limitation. Woman by her very nature and genius inevitably affirms Spirit. She holds the human race to that majestic confession. Blindly, superstitiously she may do so; blindly and superstitiously she will do so, while philosophy falsely so called has eyes to stare only into the earth: but in this blindness there is vision, and the superstition of belief need not be shamefaced before the superstition of sciolism. But superstitious or otherwise, she has the master-key; and man can but bruise his hand against the iron gate until he takes the key from hers. The metaphysic of France and England is barren because it is purely masculine; it dares not assume Spirit, this perennial import of feminine sensibility. When we have yawned over it a century or two longer, one may hope that we shall return to the starting-point, begin with Personality or Spirit, and bringing masculine logic to the service of feminine divination, attain to a philosophy. . . .

All the charm of life is inseparable from a certain fine reserve. In the half-opened rosebud, at once displaying and concealing its beauty, there is a fascination wanting to the full-blown flower. The soft veil of purple haze that lies over the Grecian landscape gives to it an enchantment scarcely conceivable to one accustomed only to the starry aspect of scenery under a perfectly clear air. What more enticing than a road winding and losing itself among woods? Inevitably the eye dwells on that point where it disappears: for there the hard every-day world ends and the world of imagination begins; beyond that point, dryads lurk and fauns with cloven heel, with all the enchanting dream-world of mythic antiquity.

Now, woman's existence is appointed to carry forever, and in the highest degree, this inscrutable, inexhaustible charm. Indeed, when this is gone she is no longer woman, but only a female animal, or at least a somewhat feeble copy of man. This peculiar genius is symbolized by her spontaneous choice of concealing draperies in dress. Mr. Winwood Reade remarks upon the painful disillusionment effected by the absence of costume among the women of tropical Africa. The imagination is quite stared out of countenance, he says, by the aspect of unclothed women; and every trace of sexual attraction disappears. Without dress, love loses its beauty, woman her exaltation, domestic life its spiritual complexion; and the relation of the sexes becomes animal only. I have seen among the Esquimaux what a sad disenchantment is operated by the spectacle of woman in trousers. It is no longer a woman you behold, but only a lumpy, ugly, ill-gaited, ridiculous man. Whenever the dress of the two sexes approximates closely, woman is degraded; a curious fact that ought not to be disregarded. In Hindostan, the men are effeminate and the women inferior: the dress of the two sexes is nearly the same. Only courtesans there conceal the bosom; the charm of costume is left to those who defile it: and in this fact alone a hint of the degradation of the sex is given to any who are sufficiently skilled in interpretation.

It is therefore by a true instinct, though pushed to a destructive extent, that Mussulman women are forbidden to appear in public unveiled. There the rosebud must always remain bound in the green calyx, never expanding in the sunshine. This is one of many instances to be found in history wherein sentiments of great intrinsic delicacy develop themselves blindly and with a kind of ferocity. What is sweeter than religion in Jesus? Yet we all know what a fury, what a merciless edge, Christian sentiment has often shown. Faith in Mohammed was preached with the scimitar, faith in Christ with the fagot and rack; and to this day those who no longer employ those summary methods for the propagation of "the faith" in this world pay themselves off by a liberal supply of menace for the next. . . .

But the sentiment from whose barbaric interpretation the growing ages must release themselves, will guide the ages still. Woman conserves for herself and for humanity that unsurpassed priceless grace of which the veil is here made the symbol. A nameless fascination leads the high labor of civilization: a nameless charm sustains the dignity of life, which would lapse into brutishness without it; and this charm hides chiefly behind the native veil of womanhood. Athens was named for a feminine divinity; the ideal woman was enthroned in the Parthenon, and here in Greece told the fine secret of civilization. It requires courage to say that woman's function is to charm; courage, for in the meaning often given it the statement is pre-eminently silly. Taken as signifying that the proper business of Araminta is to bewitch Augustus, and bereave him of the little sense nature gave him, it may be made over to the exclusive use of those who speak because they have nothing to say. But it is the business of woman to enshrine that grace which makes human life nature's supreme work of art, and keeps the eye entranced, and the heart kindled. Somewhere in life itself is the inspiration and the reward of our labor; and in the exalted reserve of woman, without design on her part, and aside from the express affection she may draw, lurks this finest resource of the race. . . .

The perennial interests of humanity may be classified as public and private, outdoor and indoor: the former having more breadth, the latter greater depth; the one catching the world's eye, the other engaging its heart; that furnishing food, this giving fertility. The means of life, that by which we live, whether as physical or as human beings; the instrumentalities of use, from the plow to the university; the sustenance that we live upon, from corn and wine to thought and philosophy,—belong to the department of public interest: but the inward enrichment, the digestion, the chemical conversion, the fructification of life, all its subtler, deeper, immediately vital interests, belong to the realm of privacy. Now, the «spheres» of man and woman correspond to these two classes of interests. Of course, the two mingle in action very intimately. When some men invite woman to *stay* indoors and mind her affairs there, she might reply by inviting man, at dinner-time or evening, to *stay* out of doors and mind his affairs there. Of course, too, each sex is concerned in the work of the other. Woman shares in all public good or ill; man, in all private. It certainly imports much to the husband whether the children of his household are born healthy or sickly, reared excellently or miserably; whether he is at home surrounded by an atmosphere of peace, amenity, charity, and all spiritual beauty, or with one of brawl, scandal, and tumbled disarray: and it equally imports much to the wife whether the husband does his duty, whether he be industrious or a drone, faithful and honorable, or the contrary, in all those concerns upon which private competence and public peace descend. I here separate these diverse interests only in respect to the *sovereignty* over them. The sovereignty, the office, the endowment and credentials of Nature are given to man and woman according to this classification. Each works for the other,—it may probably, and properly, be with a predominant regard for the other; for they are polaric. Life has its uses only in relation. He does not really live who lives only to and for himself. The plant grows *from* the soil that feeds it. «What I give, I have.»

SOCIAL TEXTURE

From ‹Essays: Religious, Social, Political.› Copyright 1888, by Lee & Shepard

All *genesis is social.* Every production, not of life only, but of faculty, power, action, motion, is conditioned upon a social constitution of beings, objects, or elements.

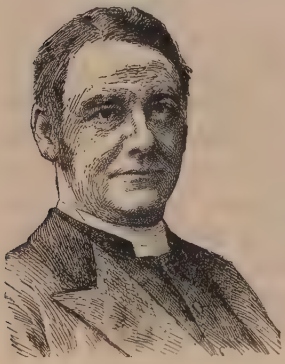
Society, as we commonly speak, signifies relation between conscious individuals. But it is obvious that every system of relation through which diverse objects, animate or inanimate, concur to one effect, is of a like nature. Now, in such relation lies the quickening of the world. Without it, nothing lives or moves; without it the universe were dead. Illustrations of this truth are to be seen on all sides: one cannot look but they are before the eyes. As the seed germinates, and the tree grows, only by effect of a society, so to speak, in which the sun, soil, air, and water concur with the object itself; as chemical correlation is in the grass of the field, in the soil that nourishes it, in the earths that sustain the soil, in the rock of which earth is formed; as locomotion is possible only through a determinate mode of relation between the active power of the mover (itself a product of relation) on the one hand, and the earth's attraction and resistance on the other; as the flow of rivers and fall of rain are conditioned upon the whole system of relations which effect the production, distribution, and condensation of aqueous vapor; as the powers of steam, of the lever, the pulley, the screw, are in like manner conditioned,—so it is always and everywhere: a social constitution of things, and order and play of relation, is required for any and every generation of effect. In the crook of a finger and the revolution of a world, in the fertilization of a pistil and the genesis of a civilization, the same fact is signalized as the fountain of all power. The birth, therefore, of the individual from social relation is anything but anomalous or singular; rather, it is in pursuance of a productive method from which nature never departs.

For the method is continued in the production of those faculties and qualities by virtue of which the individual is a human creature. Relation between men is, in the order of nature, a necessary means to the making of man. It is just as impossible there should be a really human individual without a community of men, with its genetic effect, as that there should be a community without individuals. By a man we do not mean merely a biped animal conscious of its existence, but a speaking, thinking, and moral, or morally qualified, creature. Speech, thought, and morals;—with these, there are human beings; without them, none. But, one and all, they are possible to the individual only through his relation with others of his kind.

JOHN WATSON

(1850–)

John Watson, whose widely familiar pen-name is Ian Maclaren, is a pure Scot, although he was born some forty-seven years ago in Manningtree, Essex, where his father, who was engaged in the Excise, happened to be stationed at the time. Shortly after his birth the family removed to London, where they stayed long enough for Dr. Watson to retain a distinct recollection of their residence there. The formative years of his childhood were spent however in Scotland, first at Perth and then at Stirling. He was an only child, and his parents were both remarkable personalities. To his mother's influence and gifts are due much of her son's equipment in life. She was Highland and understood Gaelic, which she used to say was the best language for love and for anger. To the observant reader of the 'Bonnie Brier Bush' it is needless to add that Dr. Watson's mother died while he was still a young man. In due time young Watson went to the University of Edinburgh, where he excelled in the classics and in philosophy. He became secretary and afterwards president of the Philosophical Society connected with the University.



John Watson

When he had completed his studies he decided to enter the Free Church of Scotland, and passed through the curriculum of the New College. He also spent some time at Tübingen. Robert Louis Stevenson was a classmate of his in the English Literature class in the University; and Dr. Watson remembers the occasional visits Stevenson made to the class, and the round of cheers which invariably greeted his entrance into the class-room. Dr. A. B. Davidson, the well-known professor of Hebrew, made a deep impression on his mind while at college; and he was greatly molded by the friendships he formed there with such men as Dr. James Stalker, Professor Henry Drummond, and Professor George Adam Smith. At the gatherings of the « Gaiety Club » Dr. Watson used to tell, with the perfect art of a consummate *raconteur*, the stories which have been woven into the famous Drumtochty sketches. He says that the first author who made any impression on his mind was Scott, whom he read eagerly. He studied the Waverley Novels, with their prefaces, introductions, and notes, and became saturated with Scott's spirit. Another stage of his development was marked by the influence of Carlyle, and still another by that of Matthew Arnold. Browning and Arnold, and Seeley the author of 'Ecce Homo,' have perhaps made the deepest impression upon his intellectual and spiritual activity. Thackeray was a later favorite.

For a short period — about a year — after his ordination, he served as assistant pastor to Dr. J. H. Wilson of the Barclay Church in Edinburgh, before he became minister of the Free Church in Harrietfield, a small village consisting chiefly of one main street, belonging to the estate of Logiealmond in Perthshire, and now far-famed as Drumtochty; an uncle of his had been parish minister there at the time of the Disruption in 1843. The work amongst this people of primitive instincts, and simple fundamental needs, proved congenial; and he made a close study of them with a half-formed intention of using the material. But self-distrust and various plans intervening, his literary schemes were laid aside and were discarded, as the years distanced him from these early scenes and experiences. His gifts as a brilliant preacher could not be hid under a bushel; and two and a half years were all that he was permitted to spend at Logiealmond. Calls multiplied, and became insistent, until he ultimately accepted one from St. Matthew's in Glasgow, where he became the colleague of Dr. Samuel Miller, whose pulpit is now celebrated as that of Dr. James Stalker.

But he found his true sphere, when, three years later, he became minister of Sefton Park Presbyterian Church, Liverpool. This took place in 1880; and Dr. Watson still remains the pastor of that church. His liberal views and catholicity of thought, his geniality and bright, winning disposition, have drawn to him men of all schools; and young men especially find a haven in Sefton Park for their varied intellectual cravings and aspirations. Dr. Watson's church is constantly crowded by one of the largest and most influential congregations in Liverpool; and among the younger generation of English preachers Dr. Watson holds a foremost place. He is a speaker of extraordinary force and clearness. He mingles culture and devotion with a strong sense of reverence and a deep-seated earnestness, which enable him to wield immense power over great masses of people. In 1896 the University of St. Andrew's conferred the degree of D. D. upon him. In the same year he visited the United States, delivered the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale, since published as 'The Cure of Souls,' and was heard throughout the country as lecturer and reader from his own works.

Dr. Watson's literary plans of early years, when his young, alert mind was casting around for material to fasten upon for future developments, had been laid aside, and treated as dreams of a presumptuous youth. Up to 1894 he was quite unknown to the public as an author; and yet, in little more than a year after the publication of his first volume, 'Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush,' the sales had exceeded in England and America 200,000 copies.

Much curiosity prevailed in England while the stories were appearing serially in the British Weekly under the pen-name «Ian Maclaren» (*Ian*, Gaelic for *John*, and *Maclaren*, his mother's maiden name); and not until a month after the book had been published, was the author's identity discovered. A year later, another volume of Drumtochty sketches, entitled 'The Days of Auld Lang Syne,' dealing with the same characters and scenes, was published with similar success. A small volume of consecutive sermons, applicable to the communion season, was issued at the beginning of 1896 under the title 'The Upper Room'; and a large volume of discourses on practical religious themes, called 'The Mind of the Master,' appeared in the spring of the same year. In his first novel, 'Kate Carnegie,' Dr. Watson is wise in keeping to Drumtochty, and introducing a number of new characters, while bringing his readers into touch with others pleasantly familiar. In the central character, the young minister Carmichael, who figures already in 'His Mother's Sermon,' one perceives a strong element of spiritual autobiography.

No real person, living or dead, has been drawn in these Drumtochty stories. When types have been suggested to the mind of the author, they have been so idealized as to be beyond recognition in the original.

Ian Maclaren differs from Mr. Barrie and Mr. Crockett in being more of a sentimentalist. There is a deeper thrill of religious emotion in his work; more of what Matthew Arnold, in his ignorance of the depths of Scottish nature, termed «intolerable pathos.» The mission of the preacher is evident in his eclecticism; for while he has chosen to subject himself to the difficulties in the way of handling simple human nature in the rough, he has preferred the good, the true, the noble, the suffering and sorrowing of his little community. Indeed, as one critic declared, there is an insolence of security in his attitude toward sorrow and death, which grates harshly when brought into touch with reality. But this criticism is borne more by his first than by his second volume, which is less spiritual and therefore more human,— more real. But Ian Maclaren's power unquestionably lies in his large sympathy and enthusiasm of humanity, which is but another term for religious emotion. The transfiguring touch in all his characters, commonplace in themselves, takes place when the light of love and sacrifice falls upon them; «as when the sun shines on a fallow field,» — to quote a passage of his own,— «and the rough furrows melt into warmth and beauty.» Then his humor,— homely, strong, and flexible as the vernacular in which much of it is clothed,— saves him on the whole from maudlin scenes, and the excess of an essentially optimistic sentimentalism, as also does his sturdy, shrewd common-sense. For pure and dry but not ungenial drollery, there is nothing in the two volumes to match ‹Our Sermon Taster› and ‹A Triumph in Diplomacy›; unless it be parts of ‹A Nippy Tongue,› where Ian Maclaren comes nearer to Galt than any of his contemporaries, Mr. Barrie himself not excepted. And it is the introduction of this perfect character, Jamie Soutar, into ‹A Servant Lass› which prevents it from becoming too depressingly sad, and gives us Ian Maclaren at his best throughout one whole story.

Popular favor however is not always guided by artistic principles; and for obvious reasons the ‹Doctor of the Old School› will probably continue to hold a first place, and in that section of the ‹Bonnie Brier Bush› the chapter entitled ‹The Doctor's Last Journey› will always stir the emotions most deeply. The pathos of the closing scenes is almost unbearable, and no Scotsman can read them with a dry heart. ‹A Doctor of the Old School› has been issued in separate book form, with illustrations from drawings made at Drumtochty; and also contains a preface by the author.

A TRIUMPH IN DIPLOMACY

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FARMS were held on lease in Drumtochty, and according to a good old custom descended from father to son; so that some of the farmers' forbears had been tenants as long as Lord Kilspindie's ancestors had been owners. If a family died out, then a successor from foreign parts had to be introduced; and it was in this way Milton made his appearance, and scandalized the Glen with a new religion. It happened also in our time that Gormack, having quarreled with the factor about a feeding-byre he wanted built, flung up his lease in a huff; and it was taken at an enormous increase by a guileless tradesman from Muirtown, who had made his money by selling «pigs» (crockery-ware), and believed that agriculture came by inspiration. Optimists expected that his cash might last for two years, but pessimists declared their belief that a year would see the end of the "merchant's" experiment; and Gormack watched the course of events from a hired house at Kildrummie.

Jamie Soutar used to give him "a cry" on his way to the station, and brought him the latest news.

"It's maybe juist as weel that ye retired frae business, Gormack, for the auld fairm's that spruced up ye wud hardly ken it wes the same place.

"The merchant's put ventilators intae the feedin' byre, and he's speakin' aboot glass windows tae keep the stots frae wearyin'; an' as for inventions, the place is fair scatted up wi' them. There's ain that took me awfu': it's for peelin' the neeps tae mak them tasty for the cattle beasts.

"Ye hed nae method, man; and a' dinna believe ye hed an inspection a' the years ye were at Gormack. Noo, the merchant is up at half eicht, and goes ower the hale steadin' wi' Robbie Duff at his heels,—him 'at he's got for idle grieve,—an' he tries the corners wi' his handkerchief tae see that there's nae stoor" (dust).

"It wud dae ye gude tae see his library: the laist day I saw him he wes readin' a book on 'Comparative Agriculture' afore his door, and he explained hoo they grow the maize in Sooth Ameriky: it wes verra interestin'; 'a never got as muckle information frae ony fairmer in Drumtochty."

"A'm gled ye cam in, Jamie," was all Gormack said, "for I wes near takin' this hoose on a three-year lease. Ae year 'ill be eneuch noo, a'm thinkin'."

Within eighteen months of his removal Gormack was again in possession at the old rent, and with a rebate for the first year to compensate him for the merchant's improvements.

"It 'ill tak the feck o' twa years," he explained in the kirkyard, "tae bring the place roond an' pit the auld face on it.

"The byres are nae better than a pair o' fanners wi' wind, and if he hesna planted the laighfield wi' berry bushes; an' a've seen the barley fifty-five pund wecht in that very field.

"It's a doonricht sin tae abuse the land like yon, but it 'ill be a lesson, neeburs, an' a'm no expeckin' anither pig merchant 'ill get a fairm in Drumtochty."

This incident raised Gormack into a historical personage, and invested him with an association of humor for the rest of his life; so that when conversation languished in the third, some one would ask Gormack "what he hed dune wi' his ventilators," or "hoo the berry hairst wes shapin' this year."

One could not expect a comedy of this kind twice in a generation; but the arranging of a lease was always an event of the first order in our commonwealth, and afforded fine play for every resource of diplomacy. The two contracting parties were the factor, who spent his days in defending his chief's property from the predatory instincts of enterprising farmers, and knew every move of the game,—a man of shrewd experience, imperturbable good-humor, and many wiles,—and on the other side, a farmer whose wits had been sharpened by the Shorter Catechism since he was a boy; with the Glen as judges. Farms were not put in the Advertiser on this estate, and thrown open to the public from Dan to Beersheba; so that there was little risk of the tenant losing his home. Neither did the adjustment of rent give serious trouble; as the fair value of every farm—down to the bit of hill above the arable land and the strips of natural grass along the burns—was known to a pound. There were skirmishes over the rent, of course; but the battle-ground was the number of improvements which the tenant could wring from the landlord at the making of the lease. Had a tenant been in danger of eviction, then the Glen had risen in arms, as it did in the case of Burnbrae; but this was a harmless trial of strength, which the Glen watched with critical impartiality. The game was played slowly between seedtime and harvest, and each move was reported in the kirk-yard. Its value was appreciated at once; and although there was greater satisfaction when a neighbor won, yet any successful stroke of the factor's was keenly enjoyed,—the beaten party himself conceding its cleverness. When the factor so manipulated the conditions of draining Netherton's meadow land that Netherton had to pay for the tiles, the kirk-yard chuckled; and Netherton admitted next market that the factor "wes a lad,"—meaning a compliment to his sharpness, for all things were fair in this war; and when Drumsheugh involved the same factor in so many different and unconnected promises of repairs that it was found cheaper in the end to build him a new steading, the fathers had no bounds to their delight; and Whinnie, who took an hour longer than any other man to get a proper hold of anything, suddenly slapped his leg in the middle of the sermon.

No genuine Scotchman ever thought the less of a neighbor because he could drive a hard bargain; and any sign of weakness in such encounters exposed a man to special contempt in our community. No mercy was shown to one who did not pay the last farthing when a bargain had been made, but there was little respect for the man who did not secure the same farthing when the bargain was being made. If a Drumtochty farmer had allowed his potatoes to go to « Piggie » Walker at that simple-minded merchant's first offer, instead of keeping « Piggie » all day, and screwing him up ten shillings an acre every second hour, we would have shaken our heads over him as if he had been drinking; and the well-known fact that Drumsheugh had worsted dealers from far and near at Muirtown market for a generation, was not his least solid claim on our respect. When Mrs. Macfadyen allowed it to ooze out in the Kildrummie train that she had obtained a penny above the market price for her butter, she received a tribute of silent admiration, broken only by an emphatic « Sall » from Hillocks; while Drumsheugh expressed himself freely on the way up:—

« Elspeth's an able wumman: there's no a slack bit aboot her. She wud get her meat frae among ither fouks' feet. »

There never lived a more modest or unassuming people; but the horse couper that tried to play upon their simplicity did not boast afterwards, and no one was known to grow rich on his dealings with Drumtochty.

This genius for bargaining was of course seen to most advantage in the affair of a lease; and a year ahead, long before lease had been mentioned, a « cannie » man like Hillocks would be preparing for the campaign. Broken panes of glass in the stable were stuffed with straw after a very generous fashion; cracks in a byre door were clouted over with large pieces of white wood; rickety palings were ostentatiously supported; and the interior of Hillocks's house suggested hard-working and cleanly poverty struggling to cover the defects of a hovel. Neighbors dropping in during those days found Hillocks wandering about with a hammer, putting in a nail here and a nail there, or on the top of the barn trying to make it water-tight before winter, with the air of one stopping leaks in the hope of keeping the ship afloat till she reaches port. But he made no complaint, and had an air of forced cheerfulness.

« Na, na, yir no interruptin' me; a'm rael gled tae see ye; a' wes juist doin' what a' cud tae keep things thegither.

"An auld buildin's a sair trachle, an' yir feared tae meddle wi' 't, for ye micht bring it doon aboot yir ears.

"But it's no reasonable tae expeck it tae last for ever: it's dune weel and served its time; 'a mind it as snod a steadin' as ye wud wish tae see, when 'a wes a laddie saxty year past.

"Come in tae the hoose, and we 'ill see what the gude wife hes in her cupboard. Come what may, the 'ill aye be a drop for a freend as lang as a 'm leevin.

"Dinna put yir hat there, for the plaister's been fallin', an' it micht white it. Come ower here frae the window: it's no very fast, and the wind comes in at the holes. Man, it's a pleesure tae see ye; and here's yir gude health."

When Hillocks went abroad to kirk or market he made a brave endeavor to conceal his depression, but it was less than successful.

"Yon's no a bad show o' aits ye hae in the wast park the year, Hillocks; a 'm thinkin' the 'ill buke weel."

"Their lukes are the best o' them, Netherton; they're thin on the grund an' sma' in the head: but 'a cudna expeck better, for the land's fair worn oot; it wes a gude farm aince, wi' maybe thirty stacks in the yaird every hairst, and noo a 'm no lookin' for mair than twenty the year."

"Weel, there's nae mistak aboot yir neeps, at ony rate: ye canna see a dreel noo."

"That wes guano, Netherton: 'a hed tae dae something tae get an ootcome wi' ae crap, at ony rate; we maun get the rent some road, ye ken, and pay oor just debts."

Hillocks conveyed the impression that he was gaining a bare existence, but that he could not maintain the fight for more than a year; and the third became thoughtful.

"Div ye mind, Netherton," inquired Drumsheugh on his way from Muirtown station to the market, "hoo mony years Hillocks's tack (lease) hes tae rin?"

"No abune twa or three at maist; a 'm no sure if he hes as muckle."

"It's oot Martinmas a year, as sure yir stannin' there: he's an auld farrant (far-seeing) lad, Hillocks."

It was known within a week that Hillocks was setting things in order for the battle.

The shrewdest people have some weak point; and Drumtochty was subject to the delusion that old Peter Robertson, the land steward, had an immense back-stairs influence with the factor and his Lordship. No one could affirm that Peter had ever said as much, but he never denied it; not having been born in Drumtochty in vain. He had a habit of detaching himself from the fathers, and looking in an abstracted way over the wall when they were discussing the factor or the prospects of a lease, which was more than words, — and indeed was equal to a small annual income.

« Ye ken mair o' this than ony o' us, a 'm thinkin', Peter, if ye cud open yir mooth: they say naebody's word gaes farther wi' his Lordship. »

« There's some fouk say a lot of havers, Drumsheugh, an' it's no a' true ye hear, » and after a pause Peter would purse his lips and nod. « A 'm no at leeberty tae speak, an' ye maunna press me. »

When he disappeared into the kirk his very gait was full of mystery; and the fathers seemed to see his Lordship and Peter sitting in council for nights together.

« Didna 'a tell ye, neeburs? » said Drumsheugh triumphantly: « ye 'ill no gae far wrang gin ye hae Peter on yir side. »

Hillocks held this faith, and added works also; for he compassed Peter with observances all the critical year, although the word lease never passed between them.

« Ye wud be the better o' new seed, Peter, » Hillocks remarked casually, as he came on the land steward busy in his potato patch. « A 've some kidneys 'a dinna ken what tae dae wi'; 'a 'll send ye up a bag. »

« It's rael kind o' ye, Hillocks; but ye were aye neeburly. »

« Dinna speak o't; that's naething atween auld neeburs. Man, ye micht gie's a look in when yir passin' on yir trokes. The gude wife hes some graund eggs for setting. »

It was considered a happy device to get Peter to the spot, and Hillocks's management of the visit was a work of art.

« Maister Robertson wud maybe like tae see thae kebbocks (cheeses) yir sending aff tae Muirtown, gude wife, afore we hae oor tea.

« We canna get intae the granary the richt way, for the stair is no chancy noo, an' it wudna dae tae hae an accident wi' his Lordship's land steward, » and Hillocks exchanged boxes over the soothing words.

« We 'ill get through the corn-room, but Losh sake, tak care ye dinna trip in the holes o' the floor. 'A canna mend mair at it, an' it's scandalous for wastin' the grain.

"It's no sae bad a granary if we hedna tae keep the horses' hay in it, for want o' a richt loft.

"Man, there's times in winter a 'm at ma wits' end wi' a' the cattle in aboot, an' naethin' for them but an open reed (court), an' the wife raging for a calves' byre;—but that's no what we cam here for, tae haver aboot the steadin'.

"Ay, they're bonnie kebbocks; and when yir crops fail, ye're gled eneuch tae get a pund or twa oot o' the milk."

And if his Lordship had ever dreamt of taking Peter's evidence, it would have gone to show that Hillocks's steading was a disgrace to the property.

If any one could inveigle Lord Kilspindie himself to visit a farm within sight of the new lease, he had some reason for congratulation; and his Lordship, who was not ignorant of such devices, used to avoid farms at such times with carefulness. But he was sometimes off his guard; and when Mrs. Macfadyen met him by accident at the foot of her garden, and invited him to rest, he was caught by the lure of her conversation, and turned aside with a friend to hear again the story of Mr. Pittendriegh's goat.

"Well, how have you been, Mrs. Macfadyen?—as young as ever, I see, eh? And how many new stories have you got for me? But bless my soul, what's this?" and his Lordship might well be astonished at the sight.

Upon the gravel walk outside the door, Elspeth had placed in a row all her kitchen and parlor chairs; and on each stood a big dish of milk, while a varied covering for this open-air dairy had been extemporized out of Jeems's Sabbath umbrella, a tea-tray, a copy of the Advertiser, and a picture of the battle of Waterloo Elspeth had bought from a packman. It was an amazing spectacle, and one not lightly to be forgotten.

"A 'm clean ashamed that ye sud hae seen sic an exhibition, ma lord, and gin a 'd hed time it wud hae been cleared awa'.

"Ye see oor dairy's that sma' and close that 'a daurna keep the mulk in 't a' the het days, an' sae 'a aye gie it an airin'; 'a wud keep it in anither place, but there's barely room for the bairns an' oorsels."

Then Elspeth apologized for speaking about household affairs to his Lordship, and delighted him with all the gossip of the district, told in her best style, and three new stories, till he promised to build her a dairy and a bedroom for Elsie, to repair the byres, and renew the lease at the old terms.

Elspeth said so at least to the factor; and when he inquired concerning the truth of this foolish concession, Kilspindie laughed, and declared that if he had sat longer he might have had to rebuild the whole place.

As Hillocks could not expect any help from personal fascinations, he had to depend on his own sagacity; and after he had labored for six months creating an atmosphere, operations began one day at Muirtown market. The factor and he happened to meet by the merest accident, and laid the first parallels.

« Man, Hillocks, is that you? I hevna seen ye since last rent time. I hear ye're githering the bawbees thegither as usual: ye 'ill be buying a farm o' yir own soon.»

« Nae fear o' that, Maister Leslie: it's a' we can dae tae get a livin'; we're juist fechtin' awa'; but it comes harder on me noo that a 'm gettin' on in years.»

« Toots, nonsense, ye're makin' a hundred clear off that farm if ye mak a penny;» and then, as a sudden thought, « When is your tack out? it canna hae lang tae run.»

« Well,» said Hillocks, as if the matter had quite escaped him also, « 'a believe ye're richt: it dis rin oot this verra Martinmas.»

« Ye 'ill need tae be thinkin', Hillocks, what rise ye can offer: his Lordship 'ill be expeckin' fifty pund at the least.»

Hillocks laughed aloud, as if the factor had made a successful joke.

« Ye wull hae yir fun, Maister Leslie; but ye ken hoo it maun gae fine. The gude wife an' me were calculatin', juist by chance, this verra mornin': and we baith settled that we cudna face a new lease comfortable wi' less than a fifty-pund reduction; but we micht scrape on wi' forty.»

« You and the wife 'ill hae tae revise yir calculations then: an' a'll see ye again when ye're reasonable.»

Three weeks later there was another accidental meeting, when the factor and Hillocks discussed the price of fat cattle at length, and then drifted into the lease question before parting.

« Weel, Hillocks, what aboot that rise? will ye manage the fifty, or must we let ye have it at forty?»

« Dinna speak like that, for it's no jokin' maitter tae me: we micht dae wi' five-and-twenty aff, or even twenty, but 'a dinna believe his Lordship wud like to see ain o' his auldest tenants squeezed.»

« It's no likely his Lordship 'ill take a penny off when he's been expecting a rise: so I'll just need to put the farm in the

Advertiser—'the present tenant not offering'; but I'll wait a month to let ye think over it."

When they parted, both knew that the rent would be settled, as it was next Friday, on the old terms.

Opinion in the kirk-yard was divided over this part of the bargain,—a minority speaking of it as a drawn battle, but the majority deciding that Hillocks had wrested at least ten pounds from the factor; which on the tack of nineteen years would come to £190. So far Hillocks had done well, but the serious fighting was still to come.

One June day Hillocks sauntered into the factor's office, and spent half an hour in explaining the condition of the turnip "breer" in Drumtochty; and then reminded the factor that he had not specified the improvements that would be granted with the new lease.

"Improvements!" stormed the factor. "Ye're the most barefaced fellow on the estate, Hillocks: with a rent like that ye can do yir own repairs,"—roughly calculating all the time what must be allowed.

Hillocks opened his pocket-book,—which contained in its various divisions a parcel of notes, a sample of oats, a whip-lash, a bolus for a horse, and a packet of garden seeds,—and finally extricated a scrap of paper.

"Me and the wife juist made a bit note o' the necessaries that we maun hae, and we're sure ye're no the gentleman tae refuse them.

"New windows tae the hoose, an' a bit place for dishes, and maybe a twenty-pund note for plastering and painting: that's naething.

"Next, a new stable an' twa new byres, as weel as covering the reed."

"Ye may as well say a new steadin' at once and save time. Man, what do you mean by coming and havering here with your papers?"

"Weel, if ye dinna believe me, ask Peter Robertson, for the condeetion o' the oot-houses is clean reediklus."

So it was agreed that the factor should drive out to see for himself; and the kirk-yard felt that Hillocks was distinctly holding his own, although no one expected him to get the reed covered.

Hillocks received the great man with obsequious courtesy, and the gude wife gave him of her best; and then they proceeded to business. The factor laughed to scorn the idea that Lord Kilspindie should do anything for the house; but took the bitterness out of the refusal by a well-timed compliment to Mrs. Stirton's skill, and declaring she could set up the house with the profits of one summer's butter. Hillocks knew better than try to impress the factor himself by holes in the roof, and they argued greater matters; with the result that the stable was allowed and the byres refused, which was exactly what Hillocks anticipated. The reed roof was excluded as preposterous in cost, but one or two lighter repairs were given as a consolation.

Hillocks considered that on the whole he was doing well; and he took the factor round the farm in fair heart, although his face was that of a man robbed and spoiled.

Hillocks was told he need not think of wire fencing, but if he chose to put up new palings he might have the fir from the Kilspindie woods; and if he did some draining, the estate would pay the cost of tiles. When Hillocks brought the factor back to the house for a cup of tea before parting, he explained to his wife that he was afraid they would have to leave in November,— the hardness of the factor left no alternative.

Then they fought the battle of the cattle reed up and down, in and out, for an hour; till the factor, who knew that Hillocks was a careful and honest tenant, laid down his ultimatum.

« There's not been a tenant in my time so well treated; but if ye see the draining is well done, I'll let you have the reed.»

«'A suppose,» said Hillocks, « a'll need tae fall in.» And he reported his achievement to the kirk-yard next Sabbath in the tone of one who could now look forward to nothing but a life of grinding poverty.